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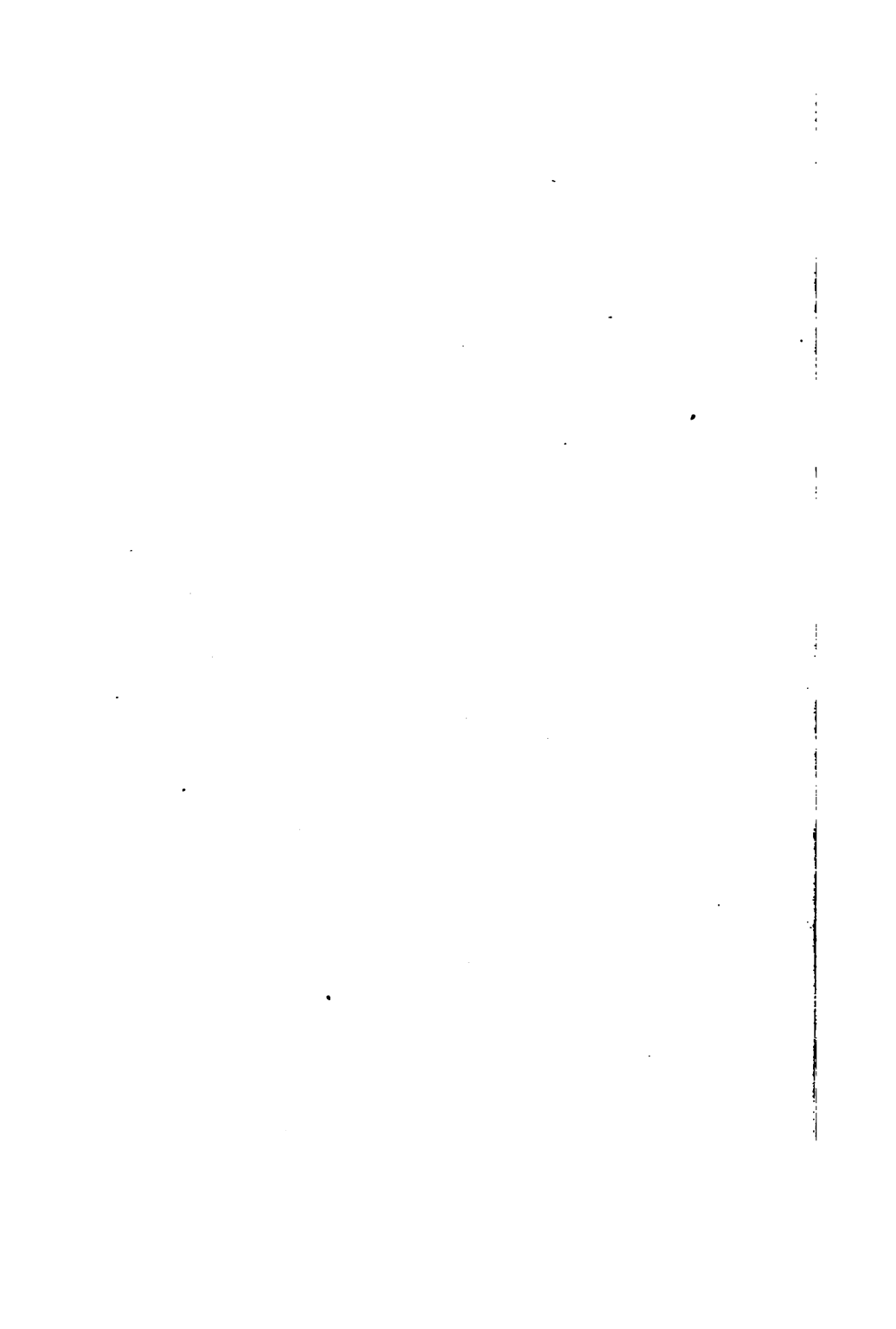
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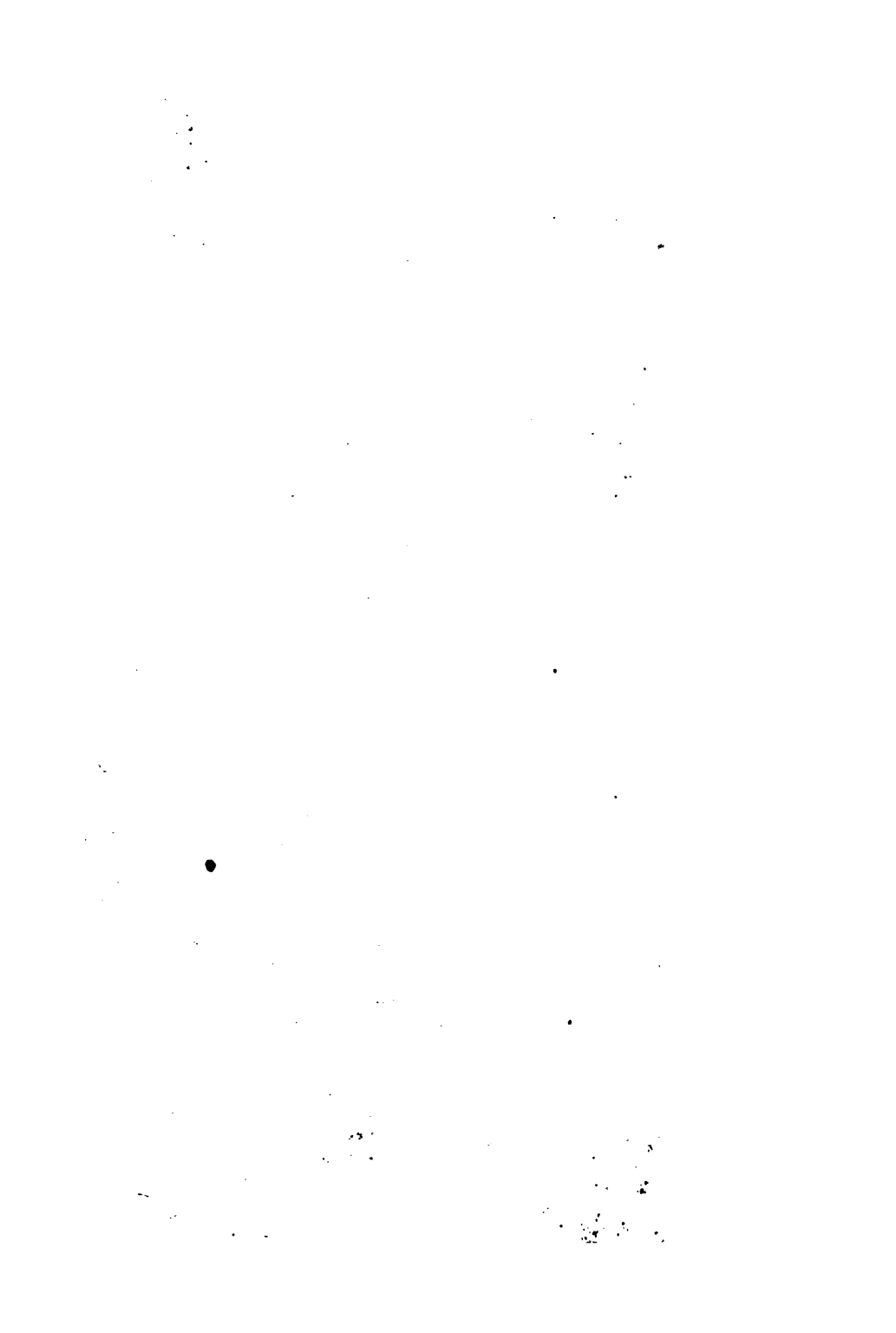












DREAM-LAND BY DAYLIGHT,

A

PANORAMA OF ROMANCE.

BY

CAROLINE CHESEBRO'.



REDFIELD,

CLINTON HALL, NEW YORK.

1852.

Second Edition.

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A True Word—In Dedication.

MOTHER OF CONSOLATION ! soul-shed tears
Fall on the thought as baptism—hast thou not
Been the consoler of my “human years,”
The one great blessing of my mortal lot ?
Thy faith it was that gave the faithless hope,
Thy love it was that fill'd the weak with power,
My weary hands would long and vainly grope,
Were they outstretched for seeking in this hour
One worthier of blessings ! Light of Life,
Heart-light wert thou when darkness gathered round ;
Only within thy love, from all this strife
Of worldliness, have I a resting found :
This is thy TITLE, there is not another,
In any king's gift like it, BLESSED MOTHER !

I call thee Consolation : when I slept
Within thy arms, a little, thoughtless child,
Saw'st thou prefigured, in those shades which crept
With sleep above me, storms so dark and wild,
As we have battled ?—when I grew, with years
Still more a dreamer, were thy tender eyes
Quick to discern, thro' childhood's grieving tears,
A soul whose birth-right was to agonize ?
I call thee Consolation ! If thy heart
Saw in such vision as the loving have,
The drama wherein I must bear my part,
Thou could'st have done no more to soothe and save
Than thou hast done, Friend rich beyond all other
In steadfastness, and trust, my blessed mother !

I think upon thee as in years long past :
 Thou wert not half so beautiful as now,
 Though Time hath over thee a shadow cast,
 And sorrow's trace is left upon thy brow :
 Nor wert thou half so precious, when the child
 Bade, opening her trustful heart, "COME IN,"
 To all who looked upon her *so they smiled*,
 Nor feared, nor thought of falsehood, guile, and sin :
 Ah, Consolation ! I have learned thy truth,
 The grandeur of thy power, and all thy worth,
 Since fled the sweet and happy dreams of youth,
 Since dead my trust in every god of earth ;
 I am not poor, but rich, while I have thee,
 For thou art God's own gift of love to me !

Thou knowest all my wealth ; and that it lies
 In Thought alone, and not in lands, nor gold ;
 Thou knowest in what mood these Tales were told,
 That I have never aimed to teach the wise.
 Thou knowest, (none so well,) *who* said, "Arise,
 And work, and dream no longer, dreaming child :"
 Thou knowest if my masters loved and smiled,
 And if my path spread clear before our eyes !
 To whom, then, should I bring such gift as this,
 Encourager thro' grief, and toil, and pain,
 Whose smile inspired as a lover's kiss
 Through strife for human needs, (oh, not for Fame !)
 To WHOM BUT UNTO THEE ? and not with tears,
 But boundless hopes, I bring this work of morning years !

CANANDAIGUA, 1851.

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P R E F A C E.

SO GREAT is the number of books at the present day, that the public, somewhat in the condition of revellers after a repast, is disposed to show itself fastidious in the discussion of any dish newly presented, and to require unusual excellence of flavor and piquancy of seasoning, to obtain for it a place and appreciation. • Fortunately for the chances of merit, the chagrin of the sated Abbe, who, on the appearance after dinner of a splendidly dressed hare, could only say to his host, with reproachful tears in his eyes, "From an old friend, I did not expect this!" —is not to be apprehended as an accident of the mental banquet; an abundance of good things rather enhancing the enjoyment of novelties which can offer peculiar claims to attention. The timid aspirant, therefore, who brings the first fruits of a soil rich by nature, and cultivated with the care necessary to develop the productions of genius in their highest perfection, need not fear that his offering will be neglected in the multitude of sweets, or condemned because of satiety; since in the usual proportion of indiscriminate devourers, over-nice epicures,

and cynics who would find fault with the choicest entertainment, there will always be found enough whose just taste can discern and estimate what is worthy of praise.

The author of this volume does not appear wholly as a stranger. Some of the beautiful tales it contains have been circulated in magazines and journals, and many readers in distant parts of the Union have been charmed by her inventive and descriptive powers, and touched by the simple pathos of her narration. These will rejoice in the recognition of a loved companion and friend, come to occupy a permanent place in their dwelling; while many, unfamiliar as yet with the voice and feature of the new visitant, will find the acquisition a most agreeable one.

MISS CHESEBRO' possesses a finely strung and sensitive nature, susceptible to all influences that expand and invigorate the poetic faculty, and imbued with a deep and intense love of the beautiful. Her early years have been passed in the midst of that fine scenery which has given the name of "the garden of the State" to that portion of Western New York, while she has devoted much time to the study of authors whose works display the most profound knowledge of the human heart. The lessoning received from each of these sources has its effect on what she has written, in which an exquisite perception of natural beauty is combined with a sense of its relation to the moral emotions, and a subjective character of mind remarkable in one so young. Withal, she possesses

powers of imagination unsurpassed by any female writer of this country, enabling her to impart vivid interest to the scenes she depicts, with a freedom and grace of style acquired only by acquaintance with the best models.

In this introduction of her volume to the public, there is a temptation to say something of the modest worth, the filial devotion, the generous warmth of heart, and the many amiable qualities of character, which have interested a large circle of friends in her success. But such ground is too sacred for intrusion. It only remains to launch upon the deep the bark she has freighted with a treasure of pure and lovely thoughts, trusting that favorable gales may spring up at once to speed its progress.

E. F. ELLET.

DREAM-LAND BY DAYLIGHT.

SHADES AND SUNBEAMS.

A TRANSPARENT STORY.

LET the curtain be drawn aside.

No wonder you of the "dress circle" sit so silently and almost terror-smitten! It is a cheerless scene indeed; that woman's moans are enough to frighten one accustomed only to sounds of joy, and voices of gladness! How thin and scanty is the covering gathered over her emaciated form—a miserable place in which to lie down, sick even unto death! Not a particle of fire on the broken hearth, and how dull, and black, and dusty the chimney-back looks, as though no fire had been kindled there of late, yet it surely is a night when a cheerful blaze in the fire-place would seem not amiss.

How fast the freezing winter rain is falling: and hark! drop, drop, drop, there is a place in the roof where shingle and rafter are missing, the rain comes in unresisted there, and oh, how dismal its unwelcome presence makes the dismal place!

See in the chimney corner, crouching, a half-starved cat. She is quite stupid with the cold—and how green and hungry her eyes look; you might count almost every bone in her body—~~still~~ she clings to that desolate place, cold and hungry as she is; perhaps in grateful remembrance of better days she has known

there, and in the hope that they may return to her again, poor deluded thing!

The flaming candle light is a luxury that looks strangely out of place, does it not? One would think, who had an eye to the "proprieties," that total natural darkness would best befit a place so very, very wretched—it looks too much like a remaining spark of comfort to see so den-like a home illuminated!

The sick woman's moans are hushed. Is she dead then? No; her face is hid in the bed-clothes, she breathes, but it is with difficulty—she is sleeping.

Now from a dark corner, whose recesses you have tried in vain to penetrate, a girl, twelve or thirteen years of age, emerges, and approaches the sick woman. She moves rapidly, but how cautiously over the rough floor, remembering to avoid the chasm which decay has made in one part, and the loose boards beyond there. If you watch carefully you will catch a glimpse of the girl's countenance as she passes where the light of the candle falls most strongly. There, you see, it would be hard to detect much beauty in her face now. She has been indulging in a violent fit of weeping. Noiselessly she is bending over the bed, assuring herself that the sick woman is asleep, and with what a heavy sigh she turns away, and takes, from a shelf near by, a faded thin shawl and a summer bonnet. She is going out. Ah, those garments are a poor protection, dear audience, from the cold—but the child does not think of that now. The fear of death—the dread of the apparently swift-coming trial, of the time when she shall be left alone, haunts her, and her own personal privations and distress are quite forgotten. She hears *now* the voice of but *one* of those her dread, constant companions, Want and Sorrow.

Softly she opens the door, how silently, almost stealthily! but her carefulness cannot keep out the bitter cold air which rushes past her, like a fiend, into the room—and before she has quite closed the door it has extinguished the bit of candle. She does not see this, however, and therefore hastens on.

Going out in the cold, cheerless night, to beg for a dying woman! To crave, in the name of charity, a morsel that shall,

may be, lessen the horrible distress of her only friend. Do you not pray, you who have never known a single privation, that this may not prove a fruitless expedition ?

Roll up the curtain again. Ha—here is something that looks like living. You breathe more freely now—you say, Heaven defend us from these pictures of want and misery, with which *we have nothing to do*. Nothing to do? Beware, thou who thus declarest faith in a creed so monstrous; for Heaven will demand of thee wherefore, with such phases of life thou hast had nought to do !

“Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?”

If the fervent response of the bridegroom can ensure the life-long happiness of the fair young bride, there will be little need to cherish fear for her future.

The rain dashes fast against the shutters, and the cold wind raves in fury without, but not a breath of discomfort can penetrate into this cheery place; yet, if it is possible to read a heart by the countenance, I would not hesitate to declare that the bride had rather this moment take the place of that child we have seen go forth into the night's cold and darkness, than stand there, the centre of loving and admiring eyes, to pronounce the marriage vows. Ay, if fancy leads me not widely astray, it were more merciful to lay that young creature on the altar, and at once destroy her, with the sacrificial knife, than doom her to a life that is little better than a living death. It seems strange, though, to call her a *victim*, for the youth by her side is a noble-looking fellow, and his heart does not give the lie to the binding vows he speaks.

All the particulars of this scene betoken that it is a mansion of the rich before you. The “floods of light,” deluging the grand apartments, rival the sunlight—and there is a profuse, and still not a vulgar display in the costliness of the adornments. Those mirrors of enormous size, the ornamental vases, are things you will not often find in the mansions of the “vulgar herd.” The downy carpet (very unlike, by the way, that

unsafe board and the decayed floor we have just looked upon,) the splendid pictures, but more than all the appearance of the mistress of this mansion, prove that it is no scene of common life you gaze upon.

This lady is standing near the bride—the one dressed in plain, gray silk. See with what deep, motherly affection she is contemplating the daughter of her heart, whom she has “given away.” She knows well how great a gift this night has been bestowed upon the young husband, for since her childhood the maiden has been the consolation of the widow’s heart. But in giving the girl as she believes in all sincerity to happiness, the lady does not dream that the shadow of a shade has fallen on the heart of the bride.

Let the curtain fall while she still believes and rejoices in the thought that “all is well.”

Once more draw the obscuring veil aside.

How fearfully the wind rushes through the casement, threatening every moment to be the death of the untrimmed lamp burning on the floor of the garret. You shudder, and think, though too gracious to tell me your thoughts, “Shall we never have done with such dark scenes?” Ah, yes, I can answer, when the old world rusts on its axis, and the present order of things is done away.

There is something more awful and repelling in the deadly stillness of this room, than in that which reigned where the dying woman lay.

An old man is the tenant of this chamber. He is alone. How fearful seems the silence and gloom, when we remember the bright and cheerful scene we have just looked upon.

This is the *home* of the aged, gray-haired man; a pleasant one, is it not? You can see the bounteous supply he has gathered in for his winter’s consuming at a glance. It will not take you very long to cast your eye over that heap of mouldy chaff in the corner, and on the broken jug which once was capable of holding the “Adam’s ale,” with which the old man regales himself, and keeps his thin old body warm—and on that hand, full of frozen bits of bread, which the mice have shared with

him since the day, long ago, when he bought the small loaf at the baker's near by.

But I see you are glancing at something besides the chaff, and the frozen bread—at something which amazes you, and makes you start and wonder if you are not dreaming. Yet I assure you there was never anything more *real* than these heaps of yellow gold the old man has poured out on the floor, and through which his long, bony fingers are playing. It seems like a countless hoard, does it not? But he has gathered it coin by coin; he has added dollar to dollar, and cent to cent, and saved *all*, and never spent, but begged, and stolen, and toiled while others slept, or played—and these, *these!* are the precious fruits!

“The workman is worthy of his hire.” And this pay, which the poor deluded creature has received, is hardly too much (is it?) for the soul which he has given in exchange into the hands of the devil! This pay, he is content enough with it. It is dearer to him, unspeakably dearer than soul, or wife, or child—it is indeed as “bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh!” It is his beautiful, beloved, glittering gold. *His gold!* Two dearer words he never knew—two more comprehensive he never heard! For they are to him life, and love, and heaven, and hell, and friends, and health, and meat, and drink, and raiment; indeed you may well doubt if he ever had any clear and defined notion of anything else on earth than his dear, blessed gold!

The greed of gain—how indissolubly has it stamped its loathsome mark upon him! You see it in the small, bright, grasping eye, in the ill-clothed limbs, in the sharp features, in the motions, in the man; and in that heap of precious stuff glittering amid such surrounding evidences of want. You see it all, how he has thrown himself upon his face that he might veil from his eyes the heaven spreading above him—which *almost* sent a thrill of awe even through his deluded nature. You see how he has bent down, and suffered his whole moral and intellectual nature to be crushed, and deadened, before that fearful Juggernaut, the idol, Gold! He has not heaped up his treasure to secure himself from the dread of want, that he might gather

in his home all that could make life comfortable. He has starved himself, he has degraded himself a hundred times below the brutishness of the animals that perish—he is shivering with cold now—his mind through neglect, and by its sordid and whole-souled worship, is in a state of idiocy; God and this miser alone knew for what he has spent his whole life in gathering this dust together. I cannot solve the mystery. I cannot guess how the worm first crawled into his breast, the hideous, frightful worm, that has eaten away and destroyed every noble principle and feeling, and hope in the man's soul, leaving its loathsome slime over every seed that *might* have sprung up in his bosom, bringing forth the most precious fruits. * * * *

There is a continuation of that first scene we have looked upon to-night, on which I would fain have you for a moment dwell.

The pale light of the winter's sun is, you see, streaming through the room, revealed now. There is no sign, or sound of life. Ah, yes! do you not hear that smothered sob, do you not see that stiff, sharp outline of a form upon the bed? do you not see a child standing beside it, uncovering often the face of the dead, and weeping over it as though her heart would break?

It is the only friend that girl has known for years, who is dead. She weeps such tears as only such mourners can weep, as she stands beside the body of her only counsellor, guide and support in the world. It makes no difference to her that the departed was housed in a hovel, and fed on the coarsest and most meagre food—it is a slight thing if the dear form was clad in rags—did it not enshrine the kind and loving heart, that was always to the lonely and desolate little one, so compassionately tender? Had not this woman been to her mother, guardian, friend? all that her young, love-craving nature most required—and is that mother not dead, and cold, and insensible for ever to her? is she not now young, and helpless, and *alone* in the wide world? * * * *

One winter morning, many years previous to the time when these three scenes were in the same hour represented, two children awakened in their comfortless home, to find themselves deserted and alone.

Their mother died when the younger of the twain was an infant, and from that time they had lived alone with their father. A cheerless home it was, with two such inefficient ones left to provide for their own wants chiefly, during long days, when their parent was gone from them. He was a strange, silent man, with little or no affection in his selfish heart for the lovely young children—no, not even so much as the brutes have for their offspring; for their cries for food often fell with an unmeaning sound upon his ear; and the thought of providing for, and supporting them, until the time should come when they would be strong and able to labor for themselves, was one he could not endure. It is a thought on which he has pondered long; let us see the result of his cogitations. This winter morning he had arisen long before daylight. He may have mistrusted the strength of his own will, but I think not. Still he never once turned a glance at the crib in the corner of the dismal room where the children slept, their arms twined lovingly about each other; perhaps if he *had* looked, he might have faltered in his purpose. Noiselessly as a cat, he crept around the room, gathering all that was easily transferable, that was possessed of the least value, even to the little painted tumbler, the prized property of the youngest girl—the gift of one of her playmates—then carefully gazing around, lest he might be watched, and to assure himself that the children were sleeping, he raised a board in the old decaying floor, and groping with his hand far along in the chasm, he drew forth a coarse cloth bag, and then quickly replaced the board again. There was a sound as of coin, jingling together when he moved the bag, it made his eyes twinkle, and a grim and greedy smile for a moment beamed in his ugly face; then taking a coal from the fire-place on the rough table he wrote in large, rude letters: “Children, I have gone, not to come back again. You are old enough to look out for yourselves. Go to work—save your money, and you may get rich; money is worth more than anything else in the world.”

Having left the sleeping innocents this precious bit of fatherly advice, the man went from the house, having taken the precaution to conceal the precious bag within his old cloak before he went.

When the children awoke and found their father gone, they were not disturbed by the thought of being left alone. It was his custom to go out early in the day, leaving them to make shift for themselves as best they might, with the meagre supply of comforts which he had provided.

When they had arisen and put on their miserable garments, Margaret, the eldest, tried to light a fire; but it was no easy task with barely one coal, which had managed to keep alive during the night, and the one stick of wet, green wood was not an astonishingly powerful auxiliary. Despite the poor children's united exertions, the wood and the coal utterly refused to burn, and at last they gave up the vain idea in despair.

A little heap of burning coal, a few bits of pine, and an armful of dry wood! the enumeration may seem a trifling affair, and call a smile to your lip, but these had been a more acceptable, more valuable gift, would have called up happier thoughts and more earnest thanks, than the splendid remembrancers my favored reader is rejoicing in just now. Yet they had it not, humble as the gift would seem. Ah, the feasting, mirthful rich! they forget that Lazarus still is lying at their gate!

Then they turned away from the remorseless no-fire, to the shelf whereon the scanty store of undeleatable provisions were kept. But there again the little ones were doomed to disappointment; for Margaret, who had stood on the old bench to examine into the state of their larder, stepped gently down again, and said, with a heavy sigh:

"He has took all the bread with him, Ellen!"

"And we hadn't no supper last night! oh, I'm so hungry; ain't you, Mag?"

"Yes," was the abrupt and sad answer of the elder. As she turned away from the pale face of her little sister, for her own eyes were fast filling with tears, she caught sight of the rough black marks on the table. With a heavy step she drew near without speaking, and bent over it.

A girl who had once been neighbor to these children had taught Margaret something about reading and spelling, for the child had never been to school a day in her life, and yet was ambitious and desirous to learn. It was therefore with diffi-

culty that she made these cold words out; but, as their meaning burst at last fully upon her, the tears she had striven so hard to keep back, fell fast, her head bent lower and lower upon her bosom—she sobbed aloud.

"What is it, Maggy?" asked Ellen, slowly, for she felt that something awful had happened.

"He's gone, Nelly!"

"Yes, but he goes every day."

"He's gone for good now—he says he'll never come back. We must starve, or go to work, Nelly, and we don't know how to work, and who'll teach us? Oh I wish we was both dead."

"But then we should be colder than we are now, Maggy, and we should never have any bread to eat at all."

"We shouldn't need any, Nell. I read it all in a book. If we could only go to heaven now, we shouldn't want for anything ever again."

"Do books tell the truth always? What if it snows in heaven, Mag?"

"No, it can't; for God is there, and people who go to heaven never know anything about cold and hunger; they're happy."

"Let's die, then. I'm so tired of living; we never knew anything but misery here, Mag."

"Yes, once, but that was a great while ago; I can only just remember—it seems a long time."

"What made us so happy then?"

"We had a mother, and father loved us, and took care of us all—we had plenty to eat, and warm fires too."

"Oh, I'm so hungry now, and almost frozen—if he had only left us a little bread—just a little bit."

There was no moaning on the part of the children, because their father had *deserted* them. It was not his love and affectionate care they missed, whose loss they mourned, when they found he was gone from them forever, for he was always associated with dreary thoughts in their minds.

Their chief reflection, when they found themselves alone, was that they should inevitably die of hunger, and death was far from being an idea full of terror to them—indeed, as we may gather from their own words, a pleasant and to be wished-for

event was it, being associated with thoughts and hopes of plenty *THERE*.

The father and his children were new comers and strangers in the portion of the city where they lived at the time of his shameless desertion; the people by whom they were surrounded, were apparently poor as themselves; there was therefore little prospect of the children's receiving aid or assistance from those in whose neighborhood they lived.

The morning passed; it was afternoon, and still no fire; and, alas! there was not even a poor raven to bring them food, though the place they inhabited was far worse than a wilderness; and the pangs of hunger might hardly have visited Elijah, as they did these tender children. It was impossible that they should long endure such bitter cold and hunger, and the want of a protector during the night hours was a horrible thought to Margaret. She resolved to go into the streets to beg—perhaps some kind heart might take pity on them, and give them a more safe and comfortable place of shelter.

With some difficulty she persuaded Ellen to lie down in the bed, and thus keep herself warm until she should return—for Margaret knew that it would be impossible for her poor little, half-frozen sister, to walk the distance which spread between them and the quarters of the city where the rich people lived.

The snow was falling fast when Margaret went out alone into the streets, so miserably clad, and, ah me, on such a chilling, comfortless mission! It was a new thing for her to beg, and it was a hard thing, child though she was and suffering, for her to ask a stranger for bread. Many a stately mansion did she pass by before she had gained courage to stop; and with this increasing dread she would have gone on and on, had not the lateness of the hour reminded her of Ellen, hungry, and cold, and alone.

Oh, doubt it not, it was Providence who directed her feet to the door where her trembling, stiffened hands, at last sought admittance. It was a happy thing for Margaret, that a Christian woman, who feared God, and loved her neighbor, lived there—that a *human* heart beat in that plenteous home!

The child was not repulsed from the door by careless, tired

servants—for the mistress of the mansion made it a point always to hear and judge for herself of the merits of those who applied to her for assistance, and it was not to a cold and suspicious soul that Margaret told the story of destitution and sorrow.

It was not a long story and was soon made known; but it interested the lady more deeply than any tale of want she had ever listened to before. When the child had partaken of a comfortable meal, and was provided with warmer garments, Mrs. Bruce accompanied her to her poor home.

It really seemed to the poor forlorn child as though she had suddenly found access to that heaven, to which in the morning she had so desired to go. And equally was Mrs. Bruce delighted with the quiet, honest-hearted girl by her side, and when she looked on the bright, youthful face, which so well reflected the thoughts suddenly lightened of the hard weight pressing but now upon them, she thought she had never seen so beautiful a child before; and the good woman's heart warmed towards the *orphan* with genuine motherly kindness.

Swiftly were they borne over the frozen snow through the streets as Margaret directed, and at last, and the way to the eager child seemed interminable, they entered a narrow lane, and the proud steeds were drawn up before the wretched house, which she pointed out as her home.

Before the sleigh was quite stopped the happy girl had leaped out, and was bounding over the narrow sidewalk, and up the broken door-step. But the smile of joy had given way to fear, for the door of the hovel stood open wide, the snow had drifted into the apartment, and indeed a more comfortless, dreary-looking place, one could not easily imagine.

In an instant the frightened girl had searched quite through the house, but no answer was returned to her loud cry of "Nelly! Nelly!" save the moaning of the wind without, which seemed sharing her distress. Quick as thought, when she saw that search there longer was fruitless, Margaret rushed from the house, and sped away to the neighbors, hoping and believing that Ellen had gone to one of them for food. She had forgotten Mrs. Bruce, and all the joy and thankfulness

which had for a moment made her light of heart. Ellen was gone, her little sister, her all on earth—gone, even at the moment when she had come back with such “glad tidings of great joy.”

Alas, equally vain was the search she made among the people of that neighborhood. To the most of them the children were altogether unknown.—One woman, in reply to Margaret’s almost frantic demand, *thought* she had seen a child of about five years of age, going down the street with a woman, half an hour before.

“Who was the woman?” was the next eager question.

“I don’t know,” was the reply; “I never see her afore.”

“Was she an old woman?”

“No, about middle age.”

“Did she look like a lady?”

“No, fur enough ’tother side. She looked poor, but didn’t seem a beggar. Only a poor, hard-working creetur.”

And that was all Margaret could find out. With a heavy heart she returned to the sleigh, where Mrs. Bruce was awaiting her. Every particle of hope, and gladness, which had made so bright a sunshine in her heart, was gone; almost beside herself with fear and grief, it was with difficulty she made known to that lady this fresh and terrible sorrow.

“Nelly is lost! what shall I do? where shall I go?” she cried, “she is lost; I shall never see her again! do but bring her back, lady; do only bring her back to me!” she sobbed, raising her eyes imploringly to her good friend. The lady was weeping, too,—her heart must have been of stone indeed, not to have been pierced by the keen anguish of the child.

“No,” she said, calming her own emotion, that she might soothe and give confidence to Margaret—“no, I do not think it is possible she is lost. But it is getting so dark it is not likely, —indeed, it is scarcely possible to find her to-night. But we will come here to-morrow, my child, and I’m almost sure we shall find your sister here then. Some kind woman has found her alone, and cold, and taken her home to a comfortable shelter for the night.”

“It is not like her to go away so; I think she would have

stayed till I came back, if they had let her. Will you surely come back to-morrow, lady?"

"Yes, certainly; you do not doubt me?"

"No, ma'am; I'm sure you'll keep your word. You will not cheat me."

It was quite dark when the sleigh was once more brought to a stand-still before Mrs. Bruce's mansion. Margaret's tears were not yet dried, nor her fears quieted, but she wept silently, and tried hard to control her grief, fearing to annoy her new found friend. The hopeful words Mrs. Bruce had spoken were beginning to soothe her mind; but she thought no longer on the pleasant home which, for the present, at least, was insured her. Continually she was repeating to herself, "Oh, if to-morrow would only come! I'm sure Ellen will be home then—she *will* go back with the woman in the morning, and wait there till I come." Nor could this one, this only consoling thought, be driven from her mind for a moment, by all the strangeness of luxury which at every turn met her eye in the pleasant home of Mrs. Bruce.

At night, long after the tidy maid-servant had placed Margaret in the warm, soft bed, which had been prepared for her, the mistress of the house sat alone in her parlor, and thought upon the strange incident of the day.

This lady was a widow of middle age, wealthy and childless. Among a large community of poor and needy people, how well known she was for her kind and judicious benefactions! Any who had right on their side, though poor as those turkeys which, from being associated with the name of Job, have become so famous, knew well that they could not appeal to Mrs. Bruce in vain. In fact this lady, so blessed with worldly wealth, felt herself to be responsible to a Power greater than any of earth, for the use she made of the riches He had placed at her disposal. She was very far from being what is called a woman of fashion—the aristocracy in which she might be ranked was *not* that of wealth—she belonged to a circle whose numbers are still more limited, though the paths they tread are open unto all. Few of the "world's people," alas, were to be found

of it, though, had they so willed, they might have been shining stars of the aristocracy of goodness!

Mrs. Bruce had a conscience—and what is somewhat wonderful, taking all things into consideration, so vile a mist had not been suffered to envelope it as would hide the beams of the sun of truth and righteousness. And fortunately she made it a point of duty to obey the dictates of this same conscience.

When, therefore, Margaret Wood came before her in such a woful plight, half-frozen and half-starved, it seemed almost like an accusation to the excellent woman; as though she had no *right* to be the recipient of so many blessings, while others in such multitudes were suffering from bitter want.

So, when she had thought over and over again the child's pitiful story, and in imagination, followed her till she had reached woman's estate—when she thought of her future fortune, as it must almost of necessity prove, poor, well nigh hopeless, broken down by hard labor, with mind uncultivated, and her heart's affections, and pure and lofty impulses all crushed, and withered; when she thought upon her thus, and remembered how different a fate it was in *her* power to give unto that child, she resolved to prove to the desolate little one a true and loving friend.

She thought of her own childhood—the only daughter of devoted parents—brought up in a home where never a want had been ungratified, careless and happy as is the childhood of the rich. She thought upon the numberless but then unappreciated blessings which had attended her early youth—of the love which, after that time, had made for her life such glorious sunshine. She thought of all her long, happy, wedded life, upon him who, though dead, was held in constant memory, and loved, and honored, and mourned. She looked forward to the future. How lonely would it be, as years crept on; and then her thoughts turned again to the child Margaret; so singularly beautiful, so unmistakably innocent, earnest, honest, and affectionate. And, do not wonder at it, she felt as though Heaven had sent that girl to her, not merely as a beggar, whose wants must be supplied and then forgotten. She felt the necessity of being something to that child besides. She

must make her her own, must educate her, and fit her for a different and a better station than that in which she was born.

So strong was this conviction, so earnestly did it impress Mrs. Bruce's mind, that she could not hesitate about acting upon it; and before her eyes were closed in sleep that night, she besought God's blessing on—*her* child!

* * * * *

"Are you going for Ellen—may we go now?" asked Margaret, eagerly, when she was led into the breakfast-room the following morning.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Bruce, kissing the child, "the sleigh will be brought round in a few moments; then we will go for your sister."

A grateful heart was that beating in Margaret Wood's breast, when the woman spoke so kindly. "I love you very much," she said, clasping her protector's hands and timidly kissing them; "you are like a mother."

"Would you *like* me to be your mother, Margaret? will you live with me, and go to school, and do as I bid you, always? will you be my little girl?"

"I love you better than anybody in the world but Ellen," answered the child; "but father said we must work; I will work for you, and do everything you tell me."

* * * * *

Many times the mother and her adopted child returned to the narrow lane, and the old hut, in search of Ellen, but never could they gain any tidings of the missing little one.—The neighbors were still unable to furnish any information respecting her—she seemed lost to them forever.

One day, in the still continuing hope that Ellen *might* come back to the old place, Margaret wrote, on the table where the cruel father had traced his farewell, for her sister to wait there should she come again, promising to meet her there, and that she would lead her to a new and happy home. But the following morning, when again accompanied by Mrs. Bruce, she set forth eagerly for the dismal place, thinking and hoping against hope that Ellen *might* have been there, they found no-

thing remaining of the decaying old buildings, save some still burning heaps of timber, which pointed out where the dwellings of that quarter had once stood.

Never had Mrs. Bruce seen before such utter wretchedness, such absolute banishment of hope in any human countenance, as was depicted in Margaret Wood's, when she turned away after that last fruitless search, feeling that the last hold on a reasonable belief that she should ever meet little Ellen again was gone.

The day following this terrible disappointment, there was given in many of the city papers a description of the missing child, of her former residence, and every particular which could afford any sort of clue to the discovery of the lost Ellen, was set forth; but no tidings of her came; she seemed to be lost irrecoverably to those who sought her.

* * * * *

Years passed. Time, and many changes around and in the heart of the elder sister, had, in a measure, deadened the sickening sense of loneliness and bereavement, which haunted her so long after she had mourned over Ellen as one dead. Even the days when they two had lived together in their uncomfortable home, were gradually assuming a dream-like shape in her memory.

Mrs. Bruce had done nobly by her adopted child. That girl was one to do honor to any hearth-stone. Young, and gentle, and highly educated, she was cherished, and loved, and honored, not only in her adopted mother's home, but wherever and in whatever circle she moved; and when it was known that she was really and in truth to be the rich lady's sole heiress, many suitors were not wanting.

Among these, there was a youth, the son of an old friend of the good woman in question, who had been so fortunate as to ingratiate himself thoroughly in Mrs. B's favor.

She had assisted him (pecuniarily) through his collegiate course, for his parents' means were but limited, and the youth was ambitious—and when he had entered, subsequently, with bright hopes on the practice of his profession, he had been furnished by her aid, with an extensive and valuable library. So,

as a matter of duty, as well as of sincerest pleasure, Richard Lee was a frequent visitor at the house of his benefactress.

You will readily understand in consequence that it was to *her* a very natural thought, and a much wished-for consummation, the union of these young beings, whom she loved with her whole heart—and a hundred plausible reasons will at once suggest themselves to your mind *why* the lady should at once and completely have succeeded in her desire.

I have revealed to you already that wedding scene. You know whether the *heart* of the bride responded to the words when she vowed to love, honor, and obey. Gratitude for the kindness of the past—the knowledge of the fact that in wedding Richard Lee, she was but acting in accordance with her best friend's, her more than mother's wishes, were the causes, and sufficient causes Margaret thought them, for the part she took it upon herself to act in that transaction. But there was also another reason which the young girl scarcely dared to breathe, even to herself, why she should wed this man, and that at once.

There was one who had never sought her affections, or her hand in marriage, on whom, nevertheless, she had lavished all the affection of her heart. Within the "holy of holies," in her breast she had enshrined him an idol, but no human mind had guessed the worship she devoted to him—she had kept her secret well.

Immeasurable was the distance between herself and him. Too well did she know it. He was wedded to another, and never even dreamed the homage that young heart rendered to his lightest word. And he was one of those mighty sons of genius to whom the universal world bows down in reverence. The intellectual giants honored and flattered him—his words were wisdom even to the wisest, and how should he know or care if the girl's heart beat wildly with devotion and love for him?

And Margaret, even while she adored, knew that such worship was sinful.

There was nothing repellant, absolutely, to her, in the youth who spoke with her the marriage vows. She knew him talented,

and ambitious, and truthful, but her heart-worship was given wholly to another.

You know now why, in that scene on which you looked, she stood so, cold, and pale, and passionless. *He* was among the crowd that pressed around her, to offer their glad congratulations, and the rich tones of *his* voice mingled with the rest like a strange and powerful chord of music. But she had ear for his only, and he named her the bride of another, while on his own arm leaned the proud and lovely women he called his wife!

Never did good Mrs. Bruce look with more of just pride on her protege, but had she read the untold story of that young heart!

My story, doubtless, has thus far proved itself a piece of transparency to the reader, and he knows who was the child watching alone beside the dying woman, leaving her for a moment, while she slept, to beg in the streets, and nursing her with little aid from neighbor or friend: bestowing on the penniless woman all the devotion and care she could have lavished on her, had she been the richest lady in the land. You know that it was she who wept with that fair bride one wintry morning, long ago, in a fireless room, when they were destitute of all life's comforts, and deserted by their father.

It remaineth for me to explain how this woman came to be her guardian.

When Margaret was gone out in search of food, and a more comfortable shelter, which expedition turned out so well for herself, Ellen, exhausted by hunger, sunk into a sound sleep. For a long time she slept on undisturbed, dreaming, poor child, of every imaginable comfort she had not, and enjoying her plenty in the bright land of fancy.

But full soon must she be awakened to the dull reality, for a human hand was laid heavily upon her, and a loud voice roused her, saying:

"Why do you sleep with your doors open here? you'll freeze to death."

The child started up, thoroughly wakened at once, and frightened, and wondering, cried, "Margaret—Margaret!"

The woman pointed to a drift of snow, which had gathered

in the middle of the room, and said, by way of explanation, that she might calm the child's fears :

"Your door was open, and I saw there was no fire on the hearth, and I thought I'd look in and see if anybody lived here. Why, child, you'd a froze stark and stiff if I hadn't woke ye."

"I'm very cold," replied Ellen, her voice little raised above a whisper ; and lying down again, "Let me sleep till Margaret comes ; she went to get some bread."

"Where is your ma, child ?"

"Dead," replied Ellen, mechanically.

"Where is your pa, then ? is he dead, too ?"

"No ; he went away and left us this morning."

"When is he coming back ? what are you going to do ? you'll freeze to death here."

"No, I sha'n't freeze ; Margaret will come ; *he* isn't coming at all," said the child, impatiently, her eyelids growing heavier every moment.

"She'll die here, that's plain," thought the woman ; "she shall go home with me."

No sooner was this determination formed, than she proceeded to carry it into effect. Wrapping the unresisting child in her own shawl, she shook her soundly, so as fully to awaken her, and said, or rather screamed in her ear : "Come, I'm going to take you home with me, where there's a good fire and plenty to eat—come on, for it's getting dark, and I've work yet to do to-night."

"But where'll Maggy go ?" asked Ellen, now quite awake, "who'll feed and warm her ?"

"If she comes back and finds you not here, she'll go to one of the neighbors and stay over night," replied the woman, hurrying away ; "now see how fast you can walk—I'll bring you back to-morrow."

With this assurance she walked away with Nelly very rapidly, further into the suburbs of the city.

And the next morning, why did she not redeem her promise ? Why, for days and days, in consequence of a dreadful cold taken that night from her exposure to the storm, (for she had walked the long distance without shawl or cloak, having wrapped her

thin blanket covering about Ellen) she was confined to the house and to her bed with sickness!

The child at first cried a great deal when she found the woman could not go with her back to her home, but when she saw how sick the poor creature was, and heard her cough so dreadfully, she ceased urging her every moment to take her back again.

When, at last, the poor woman was able to creep out into the street, the first place to which she directed her steps, was to the house where she had found the little girl, and—it was burned to the ground!

This woman was a widow and childless, and of good and tender heart, but here the similarity between her and Margaret's protectress, ended. It is needless to say she never saw, nor even heard of, the inquiries which were published respecting the little girl who had fallen to her care. Destiny *seemed* to exert a powerful hand in ordering the respective places of those children; *seemed* to have established them immutably in stations of life wider asunder than are the Poles. * * * * *

There were two or three of the dead woman's friends who came to the burial. The coffin was carried to the grave by their husbands, and Nelly followed the corpse, a mourner full of sorrow.

There was a clergyman, a poor man, too, and he prayed long and earnestly over the grave when the coffin was hid in the ground; he prayed for *the child of the widow*. He was right, though he did not know the relationship existing between the sobbing girl and the dead. She *was* even as a child, and she mourned the loss of her mother!

That funeral day was the darkest, saddest day the poor girl had ever known. Life seemed to her but one long path leading through darkness, and as she went from the grave-yard with the toiling women, holding fast the good minister's hand, she wished with all the eagerness of her young heart, that she also might speedily be laid to rest there, never to waken again.

It was summer time, but the day was very gloomy. The sky was dark with clouds, not a bird's song was to be heard, and the low deep tones of the wind sounded like a heavy sigh breathed over the earth.

Ellen went home from the burial with one of the poor women, who would not hear of her going back again to the lonely place where she had lived. For several weeks she remained there, sick with grief and long watching. During that time, in compliance with her wish, Mrs. Grant was seeking to obtain for her a place in the house of one of the women who employed *her* occasionally. * * * And Nelly is thirteen years old now; she may look upon herself as her own mistress, for there is no one who has any natural claims upon her. To youth the thought of independence is a darling, precious, cherished one, but it is difficult for any one who has not been circumstanced as was little Nelly, to conceive what wretchedness there was in the knowledge that there were none to guide, none to counsel, none to aid her, as she stood about to embark on the stormy waters of an untried life.

She must *work* henceforth—ah, reader, do you know what *that* meaneth? Not as she had oftentimes toiled before, to help her protector, to aid her in her labors. It must be in a far different manner. She must go to a place in a family of which she knew nothing, truly speaking—must serve as a servant there. She was very young, a stranger to the ways of those with whom she would live—her employers would think it was their lot to have to bear much because of her ignorance and unskillfulness; but *she*, poor young thing, would she not also have to bear much? Would they care to think if *she* were ever pleased or gratified; would the tastes of the little servant-girl be ever held in consideration; would they think of her as human? *She* must bear and suffer, and a dangerous experiment it would prove to speak out in her own behalf, even when wrongfully abused; *she* must be always faithful and enduring, and the hope of the reward of a kind word from her dear old friend who could never again smile on her, and encourage her, and tell her if she was doing well; even that was denied her.

Nelly had quite recovered from her illness, and was beginning to cherish more cheerful thoughts of the future, for Mrs. Grant was *sure* of finding her a situation in the house of one of her employers. One night when she came home, her day's work well accomplished, there was a broader smile on her face than

usual, and warmer emphasis in the kiss she gave the little girl. "I've good news for you, child," she whispered, and then went bustling about the house, preparing supper for her good man and the boys.

When their wants were supplied, and they had gone out again into the street, some of them to their labor, and Mrs. Grant was at last seated, and making preparations for a fine smoke, Nelly could restrain her curiosity no longer.

Drawing a little bench close beside the old woman, she sat resting her head on her knee, and saying :

"You've got a good place for me, mammy, I know you have, and I'm to go to some lady's house to live?"

"Yes, child, it's just so; but I wish I was to keep you for my own! A girl is more of a comfort to a hard-working woman like me, when I sit down of a night to rest, than a pack of romping boys is. You've made the old place look quite cheerful like, since you've been here, Nelly, by your handy ways."

"But *you* have been so kind to *me*! You have got me a place where I can do for myself, and not be a burden to anybody. You are all the friend I have—oh, I shall think of you very, very often, and I'll come to see you when they let me out, and you'll go to the grave-yard where *she* is, sometimes, won't you, mammy?"

"Yes, child! yes, *always*, when you want me. And I tell you it will be a pleasure to see your pretty face here often—you'll be more merry though when you go up to the fine house where I've got a place for you."

"I hope it isn't *very* great," murmured the child; "what'll I have to do there, do you think?"

"I 'spect what they'll want o' you most is, to tend door, and wait on 'em. They're a nice kind of people, and not stingy—a kind o' 'live and let live' sort of folks. You'll suit, *I* know, if you try. And you *will* try?"

"Yes, mammy, it shan't be my fault if they're not pleased. But I know they'll never care for me, as *you* have cared, and as *she* did."

"Well, child, I'll tell you what—'taint their nature to," was Mrs. Grant's comforting assurance; "rich folks ain't like poor

folks any how; it takes the poor to *feel*. I don't know as it's their fault either. If they could only change places with us kind of folks for once, they'd know more'n they do now. But it's a kind of comfort to know that every house has its cupboard of bones!" * * * *

With this family, in whose employ Mrs. Grant secured a place for Nelly, she remained more than a year. Kind, good-hearted people, as the old woman had foretold, they were, and the comforts of life became more familiarly known to the little waiting-maid there, than they had ever been before. The duties imposed upon her were few and light, and they were always well performed, and Nelly Wood gave general satisfaction in the large household in which she was employed.

But soon after the twelvemonth of her residence there had expired, the body of servants were at once dismissed, the house shut up, and, without any explanation, its owners departed for parts unknown.

"Never mind, dear," said the friendly Mrs. Grant, when Ellen turned to her for counsel, "I was thinking some time ago of a place better than the one you've had, and I've spoke to the lady, 'cause I heerd the folks up in the big house you lived in was going to quit."

And Ellen's guide was successful in this effort to serve the friendless girl also; for in a few days she was accompanying her to the new place of service.

The heart of Nelly failed her as she thought of the kind people with whom she had lived, and of the strangers to whom she was now going, and closely did she clasp the hand of the aged laboring woman as though she *feared* parting with her, assuring her more than a dozen times that she would come often back to visit her and the children.

Mrs. Grant seemed to know what was going on in the mind of the girl; for, as they passed through the neatly gravelled walk, which was bordered with many flowers, to the kitchen door, she whispered to Nelly, "Never mind—don't be afraid. I'll stay till you get acquainted a little—you'll like these folks."

"This is the girl your mistress engaged," she said, in explana-

tion to one of the servants, when they entered the basement. "How is your lady this morning?"

"Poorly," answered the other; "I fear she's not long for this world."

"I'm sorry, poor creetur, she's so young, and good, and handsome."

"Yes, it *is* too bad. The doctors says she hasn't no disease—it's a decline like; just kind a sinking away as one sinks to sleep."

"Maybe she wouldn't care to see Nelly just now?" asked Mrs. Grant, looking toward the door, and still standing.

"I think not," replied the servant, kindly, "but you can leave her here, and toward noon, when the lady likes, I'll go up with her—it's a pity you should lose half a day's work waiting."

Ellen turned quickly toward her friend, as though she would implore her to stay—but she did not speak.

"What is it, dear? shall I stay?" asked Mrs. Grant.

"No, no," answered Ellen; "go, now, because you must—but do come in for a minute to-night, if this place is in your way."

"Yes, I'll come if it's miles out of my way, darling; it'll be only a few hours afore I'll be here to-night." Having said this, she hastened away to her labors.

Ellen sat in the kitchen the greater part of the morning, assisting the servants, and winning the best opinions by her kind and obliging manners. At last the message came, saying that the mistress desired the new waiting-maid's appearance; and, notwithstanding the experience she had already had, it was with a fearful heart that she obeyed the call.

As she entered the chamber of the invalid, her step was slow and her eye downcast, but when Ellen heard the lady's voice speaking so kindly and encouragingly, she raised her eyes, and it seemed to her that she stood in the presence of some good genii, who had at a word, and stroke, created the beautiful place in which she was.

The large windows of the apartment were thrown open, but the blaze of sunlight was shut out from the room by outer and inner blinds. Many vases of freshly gathered flowers filled the pleasant place with their sweet perfume, and the white furniture,

the snow-like drapery of the bed, the delicately tinted carpet, all conspired to make the sick lady's prison house a delightful one, the very shrine of purity and beauty.

The lady was reclining on a sofa when Ellen entered the room ; near her was a cradle, and an infant, the young girl thought the most beautiful in the world, was sleeping in it.

"Come and sit down by me," said the sick woman, kindly, when the servant had left her with the mistress ; and with a slow step and timid manner, Ellen approached to the cushioned bench pointed out to her.

"You are young," said the lady, "younger than I had thought—do you think you will be able to aid me much in taking care of my little one?"

"Oh, yes, I'm sure—I'll try, ma'am," answered Ellen, concluding her reply in a bashful tone, far unlike the eager, happy manner with which she had commenced it.

"How old are you, pray?"

"Almost, no, a little more'n thirteen."

"And have you ever lived out before, my child?"

"Yes, ma'am, a little over a twelvemonth, but there wa'n't any children at Mrs. Gray's."

"Do you think you will like it here, then, if you know nothing about taking care of children?"

"Oh, but I'll learn very soon. Mrs. Gray thought me quick at learning the ways of her house—and I love your little baby."

Between a mistress so kind as this new one, and a servant so tractable and good as Ellen, there was no prospect of dissatisfaction or injustice on the one hand, or neglect or ingratitude on the other. "The baby" was the pet with both, and the relations they bore to each other, precluded all possibility of jealousy on either side, in the attention and love they each lavished on her.

Every week, an evening was spent by Ellen with her old friend, Mrs. Grant, when the excellences of the infant, the beauty, and patience, and kindness of the mistress, and the pleasantness of her new situation, were never-failing topics, to all which, as the young girl discoursed so eloquently upon them, her hostess lent a willing ear. Every day Ellen was growing in grace and beauty, and her mind was improving, also, under the instructions

of her invalid-mistress, and her poor friend, with a sigh, was forced to surrender one hope she had cherished, that her son Willie might some day win Nelly for his wife—for he, poor fellow, was proving but a sorry clown, and she, to Mrs. Grant's eyes, seemed almost as much a lady as the daughters of the great folks who lived in the fine houses.

In the burial ground, which lay in the neighborhood of this old woman's home, there was one grave which, when the weather permitted, was visited regularly one day in every seven by Nelly Wood and her friend. And among a hundred neglected graves that were marked by no headstone, and no care of surviving relatives, there was one which was made very conspicuous by the green and well kept sod, and the flowers which, during the spring, and summer, and autumn months, were found blooming there. It was a sacred place to both those hearts which visited it so often, and they never turned from the else so dismal graveyard, without an inward assurance that they had been made better, more patient, more charitably disposed toward the world, by their momentary rest in the solemn place. Gratefully, most gratefully was the memory of the dead friend cherished by the orphan girl, and it was one of her proudest hopes that some day she might erect a tombstone there to the memory of her beloved dead.

The summer months passed away, and the dreary autumn rains set in, and the cheerfulness which had, during the warm, sunshiny weather, marked the invalid, disappeared ; she seemed lost in gloomy thought, which the presence of her husband, who was devoted in his attentions, failed to brighten or remove.

During the day, the little nurse was usually her sole companion, and the gentle manners of Nelly, her affection for the child so much entrusted to her care—her beauty, and craving for knowledge, made her an object of more than common interest to the sick lady. One dark day, when the books were laid aside, the baby asleep, and the stillness to the invalid was becoming intolerable, with a sort of vague listless curiosity she turned to Ellen, asking abruptly :

“When you first came here, I think they told me you were

an orphan—that you have no father or mother living? How sad it must be to be an orphan!”

“It is too true. Mother died long, long ago. I do not remember her at all. Father I can just remember, and that is all.”

“Where did he live? Do you remember his last sickness?”

“He was not ill—he did not die *then*—he left us a great, great while ago, and I never have seen him since.”

“Was he poor?”

“Yes, ma’am, *very* poor.”

“But you said *us*, he left *us*; were there many of you?”

“Only my sister and I. Sometimes I have thought he was not our father, or he would not have deserted us, leaving us without a morsel to eat, and we had no money to get food.”

“I should have thought you had forgotten all this, for you must have been very young. But your sister has told you often, I suppose?”

“I have no sister now,” answered Ellen, sadly; “she, too, is dead, or was lost long ago. I am alone in the world.”

“Dead! lost!” repeated the invalid, and rising on the sofa, she examined more closely than before the features of the young girl. “Pray, then, what became of you when you lost her!”

“A poor woman took me—she found me half-dead with cold and hunger—she gave me a home.”

“The one who brought you here?”

“No,” answered Ellen, and the remembrance of all that friend had been for her, brought tears into her eyes—“she died before I ever went out to service.”

“Was she kind to you; child?”

“She was my mother—I lost my all when she died.”

“Oh no!” exclaimed the lady, and her head was buried in the pillows of the lounge, and for many moments there was dead silence in the room. Then she roused herself, sitting up again, she beckoned to Ellen, and said in a trembling whisper: “Come close up to me—put your arms about my neck, and tell me your blessed name! It is not Jarvis, it is something else! Come, come, quick, if you are Ellen, Nelly Wood,

come!" And she stretched out her arms as though she would clasp Ellen to her breast.

With a glad cry, "It is that—Nelly Wood—yes, it is that—oh, I have tried so many, many times to think what that name was—and you, you *are* Margaret—my Margaret!" exclaimed the little waiting-maid, as she flung herself beside the lounge and sobbed aloud. But Margaret did not answer, did not hear aught save that first quick reply, "it is *that*;" she had fainted quite away.

When, after the glad child's repeated exertions to arouse her sister, Margaret's eyes at last opened, and beheld the slight form of the dear little Nelly bending over her, she whispered, lovingly, "I have prayed and hoped so many times that I might see you and be with you, Nelly, for but one moment before I die. And lately it has been the only thought I have cherished, that we might meet once more."

"And we shall not ever again be parted, shall we, Margaret? You *will* love me as when we lived in that poor place—we shall be *always* together now! shall we? shall we?"

"Yes, always," repeated Margaret, as again and again she pressed her thin lips to the brow of the happy Ellen; "and you will be well now, Mrs.—Maggy! I will be your doctor, and give you medicines and nurse you, and—"

"Yes! yes! you will be my own dear Nelly. We have both something to live for now. God bless you!—God bless you!"

Away with doctors, and their now so useless stuffs! Margaret Lee did not need them after that happy morning; she had discovered a sovereign panacea, such as they had not, such as they could not find—had been aroused from the dream of imagination which had well nigh proved fatal; and now she has quite learned to love the noble young husband who bore so long and patiently with her—and he has for ever taken the place of that unholily worshipped idol that was once throned on a lofty pedestal in her young heart.

That white-robed bed-chamber bears no resemblance now to the chamber of death. There are roses blooming brightly on the face of the beautiful wife, as on your own, my gentle reader, and I doubt if there are many happier homes on earth, than the home of Richard Lee.

* * * * *

Let the curtain be drawn aside once more. Another scene before we part.

What, another exhibition of misery? Yes! look on the miser's death-bed!

You see him lying on that heap of straw, the gray-haired old man, whose life has long been devoted to that one unhallowed object—the gathering of gold. He is dying. There is but one to stand beside his death-bed, and watch as the spark of life flickers away. There is but one to close his eyes when his cold heart shall have stilled its beatings. But, alas, there is not even *one* to weep when he is gone! There are none to miss him by the fireside—none to whom the world will seem less beautiful when he is laid aside—none to whom his bent form is an object of love and reverence—none in whom he has inspired other than one feeling, that of intense disgust and fear!

He who stands by him, and watches the departing, does so with no sympathizing, loving eyes. His whole soul revolts from the duty which devolves upon him.

“Now mind,” said the old man, speaking slowly, and striving to rise in his bed; “mind what I’ve said. Just as quick as ever I’m dead, do what I’ve told ye. You’re the only being I ever trusted—mind *you* don’t deceive me! If you do, I’ll haunt you all your life, and make you pay more for the cursed gold than it’s all worth.”

They are his last words. You see he has fallen back; he is quite dead.

The gentleman who has watched the miser’s last moments is bending over him. He feels his hand—it is cold. He listens—the heart has stopped its beating—no breath comes from the nostrils—yes, he is *dead*! Let the curtain drop—it has descended on him for ever more.

The watcher descended from the chamber of death—his face bore witness to the terrible scene he had beheld—he was eager to be away from the house that contained even the *mortal* remains of such a spirit. Giving some money to the man and woman whom he met at the foot of the stairs, he said to them,

calmly, "Prepare him for burial to-morrow at two o'clock. I will be in attendance at that hour." And he passed out.

In a few days every leading paper in the city of —— contained an announcement that the two children of the late Joshua Wood, named Margaret and Ellen Wood, of the respective ages of —— and —— years, would hear something greatly to their advantage by applying at the office of Benjamin Hayes, 80 Chestnut-street.

The old miser had starved himself, and left to the children he deserted in their helplessness, a fortune, amounting to half a million of dollars!—and a portion of that money, which the old man loved so well, has built a home for the orphaned, the deserted, the poor, and the destitute, where a multitude of weak and helpless ones have learned to bless the names of the miser's noble children.

And the days of Mrs. Grant's labor and care on earth are over now, for Ellen Wood never forgot who, under Providence, had befriended her, and led her to the home of her sister Margaret. But not alone in the homes of the living has her presence been seen and felt. A certain, well-kept, well-remembered grave, perpetuates in the world the name of one whose deed of charity, albeit she was poor and despised on this earth, has doubtless, ere this, been rewarded in heaven. For the voice whose decree no man can revert, has surely said unto her, "Friend, come up higher."

Ah, let us render thanks unto the once despised, the glorious Son of Mary, at *this* season of all others, for the blessed assurance, that with God there is no respect for persons! Let us thank and praise Him that the same spirit of charity and love that was in Him has found acceptance and perpetuation in many human hearts, who recognise with joy their high and holy mission—that of aiding in the work of purification and charity which himself begun! Let us bless Him that in the darkest fortune the moonlight and the starlight are permitted—that the sunbeam and the shade have been interspersed in our pathway through the fields of time!

AURORA BOREALIS.

"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

LITTLE ALICE DEAN was dead.

Alice, the beautiful child, the cherished and only daughter of—a poor factory-man.

Beside her bed, every day while the fatal fever lasted, might have been seen an untiring watcher—a strong, rough-looking, silent man, who fed the sick child, and gave her medicine with all a woman's tenderness. There was also another anxious, pale face, that very often bent to kiss the little sufferer, a woman who moved about with noiseless steps, who wept and prayed for her darling when no eye observed her. It was the mother. And there were, moreover, in that house five wild boys, whose merry voices were hushed, whose play was all suspended; and bitterly and passionately they wept, when told that little Alice must die.

Ten years had she lived a very angel in their home; that else cheerless house, where want and every discomfort were so well known. Her smile was like a sunbeam, shining through the little windows, and her voice, gentle and low, the sweetest melody to the hearts which loved to hear it—a patient child, on whom heavy care was laid all too soon; a loving girl, who bowed her own will always to that of others, meek, submissive, and affectionate.

Young as she was, Alice had already proved herself an efficient aid to her mother about the house; and to her father, the hard-working and industrious man, her welcoming smile when

he came home at night almost stupid from his day of wearisome labor, was really a joy invaluable. And whose fingers were so nimble in covering Alick's and John's new yarn balls? Who could so neatly paste Walter's paper kite? Who could tell such nice stories to Dick, and explain them all as she went along so patiently to stupid little Benjamin, as the dear, sweet Alice, friend of everybody, slave of everybody, I had nearly said?

It was a sad and anxious day when the doctor was called to prescribe for her; and when he stood beside her bed, and felt her pulse, looked at her tongue, and shook his head so solemnly, they all felt that her doom was sealed. Day after day she continued growing worse; then she became delirious, and did not know any of them when they called and spoke to her; and on the ninth day she died.

It was a pleasant, sunshiny afternoon on which they buried her. But Pierce and Agnes Dean felt that they were hiding away their choicest gleam of sunlight in the grave, when the dead Alice, in her coffin, was laid in the ground.

The day after the funeral, a long and most dreary day had it proved, Pierce turned from the busy scenes of the city—it was growing dark, he must return home. Cheerless, and unaccountably lengthened seemed the familiar walk to him—the distance *once* was nothing; for then a welcome, and a delight which never failed, awaited. Before he had nearly reached home, it grew quite dark, the sky was cloudless and starlit, but there was no moon; deep and heavy lay the frozen snow upon the ground; and there was a solemn, oppressive, and, as it seemed, momentous silence settling over the earth, such as oftentimes precedes a storm.

The laborer sought his cottage with a desponding heart. He could have wept as he entered the narrow, desolate street where he lived, had he not been too proud to expose such weakness even to himself. All his lifetime, Pierce Dean had been unfortunate. Fate seemed to have really set her face against him; she resisted all his desperate attempts to better his condition; and in all his advances made in the hope of conciliating her favor, she treated him with the greatest apparent contempt.

This state of things seemed to the poor man very hard and very strange; for while he by the sweat of his brow, and desperate wear of limb, had only been able to supply his family with bread to eat, and clothing of the simplest kind, some of his neighbors had taken rapid strides towards fortune; and other some, remembered as poor boys when himself was young, had far outstripped him in the race of advancement, while despite all his endeavors, *he* stood in just the same position (socially) that he had held when a pauper child. This was not the fault of Pierce, nor indeed of his wife; he was not given to intemperance, nor she to improvidence; but somehow they never knew the time when their means proved to be in advance of their wants.

To-night the father's cup of sorrow and trouble seemed really overflowing. His long and necessary absence from the factory, had lost him a very good place; for in the town in which he lived, there was never any lack of workmen. And all that day he had spent in looking out for employment of some kind, but with no success; and almost in despair, Pierce had set out on his return. As he approached home, his step grew slower and slower, for the husband dreaded breaking the intelligence of this increase of bad fortune to his wife; for he loved her, though she was indeed no fairy to look upon, and notwithstanding he had never been very lavish with vows and protestations of attachment.

There was not a vestige of those good looks of which, when young, she might possibly have boasted, traceable in the careworn, sickness-marked countenance of Agnes Dean. Altogether graceless was her bent, skeleton-like form; but the beating of the heart within was true, its blood was warm. Hardship and privation had made the woman thoughtful, and of few words, and seldom were smiles to be seen in her face; but her voice was kind, the fountains of her sympathizing tears were not dried up; she was a watchful, careful, loving wife and mother, and Pierce prized her to her worth. Therefore the idea of adding to the sorrow with which she mourned her lost child, was very grievous to him.

But, with his long delay in reaching home, Pierce was almost

frozen; he was forced to quicken his pace, for he could see the fire-light through the windows, and he knew that supper would be already prepared. A surprise was awaiting him, as well as the evening meal. Another daughter, an infant, had come to take the place of the little departed one; and joy, and thankfulness, with a troubled looking into the future, made tumult in the heart of Pierce, as he watched that night over the mother and the child.

Towards morning, doubts and fears which took far flights into the future, increased his heaviness of spirits; scalding tears, that would no longer be kept back, filled his eyes. The wailing of the babe sounded like a foreboding, warning cry, of evil days to be. The poor man had never been so mastered by conflicting emotions before, and as he by degrees lost all control over himself, fearful that his wife should see his emotion, Pierce with hasty steps arose, and walked from the house. The peace and the solemn quiet of the night which had on his return home so oppressed him, were soothing to him now. Inexpressible calmness, and contentment, and resignation, took the place of the darkness which had tortured him with its fell shades. Involuntarily, as in times of sudden peril and joy the soul lifts itself to heaven, he turned his gaze above.

And what think you?

Pierce was a man of plain sense, never led astray by his imagination, not wont to indulge in any flights of fancy; yet did he stand spell-bound, and without a doubt of its reality, before the vision which was then revealed to him.

Over the whole northern sky, troops of spirits were moving with a velocity which wearied thought—speeding one moment to the zenith, and the next in beauteous swift motion starting back and reappearing in new and fantastic forms, and, as it seemed, holding high revelry amidst the silent, august stars.

In his admiration and awe, the poor man forgot all his despondency; for the first time in years, he stood forgetful that there were such things in the world as hardship, weariness, and bereavement. And as he watched in delight and amazement, while the brilliant forms in the realms above were reflected so clearly in the snow, a spirit, brighter, fleet, and apparently

more exalted than the rest, sped to the heights of heaven, then pausing and bending down, she whispered—Pierce heard her quite distinctly—

“Name thy child Aurora!” and the other spirits heard the word, and with solemn, silvery voices sang they, “Yes, name thy child Aurora!”

Awed, and half afraid, he stood and gazed, and wondered, while unmindful of his presence and curiosity, the dance of the spirits was continued. An hour passed on, but the mortal had forgotten how stinging cold the night was; once he remembered that Agnes might need his care, but some invisible agency seemed to hold him bound to that place where he stood, gazing up into the great skyey halls in the vast distance.

At last came up above the horizon, from the unknown, unseen lands, a lesser fairy; the great company having disappeared, she stood before the earth-man quite alone. With timid and uncertain step she passed through the magnificent corridor, then bent as her predecessor had done, but still more humbly, as she said,

“Father, I am your little Alice, that died! Do not weep for me, I am so happy. Name the little baby Aurora,—then I shall be her guardian angel, for they call me Aurora here. Though, father dear, you must always call me Alice, when you and mother talk of me.”

Then with the swiftest step the sprite sped back to the obscure beyond. Pierce knew the enchantment was over then, and with a hasty step he returned to the house, where his wife, in fear and wonder, occasioned by his long absence, awaited him.

With a relieved heart, when he at last appeared, did she question him about his long absence, but Pierce did not answer her. Taking up the infant, he said in a voice so glad and gay that Agnes began to tremble for his reason,

“Now we’ll have a fine christening, a noble christening of our little girl; wife! Say, what shall we call her?”

“Give her to me, Pierce, you talk like a crazy man. If I hadn’t lived with you fifteen years, and didn’t know you better, I should think you’d been drinking.”

“No, but tell me first, what shall we name this little one?”

The answer to this repeated query was a flood of tears, and when the good man saw that, he did not delay obeying his wife any longer. Sitting down quietly beside her he said,

"But tell me, wifey, what shall we name her?"

"There's no need of such haste, Pierce. If there was, I should say, name her—"

"Would you have it Alice? Shall it be the name of the dear child we buried yesterday, Agnes?"

"That was in my head, but don't call her so yet. I couldn't bear it."

"Wait, then—you needn't! Let me tell you, we must call her *Aurora*," he said, gently whispering, "Alice said we must!"

Agnes raised herself in the bed as Pierce said this, and anxiously scanning her husband's face for a moment, she sunk back again exclaiming, "Pierce, you *are* crazy!"

"Don't say that again," answered he, but not impatiently, and rising from his seat he stood before Agnes and said,

"Just now, when you were thinking I stayed away so long, I saw something strange, and heard something strange, too. Little Alice was up in the sky with other spirits, and she said her name was *Aurora* now, and that we must call the little baby *Aurora*. I didn't tell her we had another daughter, she knew it herself; so, Agnes, we *will* call her *Aurora*, and that *will* be naming her after our darling."

"Yes," said the mother, softly, in awed wonder, expressing neither doubt nor fear. "Yes, we will call her *Aurora*, for she has made light in the darkness," and she turned her face towards the infant, and wept silently, most grateful tears.

And Pierce,—he wrapped himself up in a blanket and laid down to sleep! Very pleasant was his slumber, though another child to feed and to clothe was added to his household; and very lovely were his dreams, though his employment was gone, and the morrow and all succeeding days spread before him a rather barren path. For a voice, only think of it! a voice so like the voice of little Alice (only the words seemed too wise for a child's utterance) said to him in his dream, "Do not despair, for the morning is dawning; you and yours shall neither

starve nor freeze, only be true to yourself, be active and hopeful, and He who hears the young ravens when they cry, will keep watch over you."

In the morning, light of heart, Pierce arose early, strove to make the dependent little household comfortable, prepared breakfast himself, kissed the baby Aurora, spoke cheerful words to Agnes, bade her be hopeful of the future, and without making known his loss of place to any of them, set out for the business part of the city, there to seek for work.

And it was with the confidence of one who knew he should find profitable employment, that the man went his way. The blessed dreams of the last night were not to be doubted; he too should at last be happy and prospered on earth.

And his presentiments of good did not prove idle. Better days, even from the dark night of adversity, had dawned on Pierce Dean. The sunbeams of fortune at last deigned to smile on him, as well as on his neighbors.

And, not only in the man's fortune, but in himself, there was visible improvement. The thoughts he cherished towards the great world were more charitable, he became more mild, and forgiving, and affable; and with the capability of aiding others, the strong desire to do so, increased. The blessing of God had the happy, but alas! not the common effect, to make him humble, grateful, and mindful of the mercies extended to him. Often the careworn and anxious visage was then relaxed with smiles, the jealous and morose disposition was softened, the step became less heavy, and the stooping figure was elevated with the joyous thought that he was no more to be looked upon as a mere beast of toil. Tokens of increased prosperity by degrees were made visible in his dwelling, and it soon became very evident that the good people living there were "stealing the march" on their old persecutor, Want.

In the course of years, Pierce found himself the possessor of a considerable sum of money, enough to purchase a small farm that lay up further in the north, in the region where he and Agnes had spent their childhood. And as they grew older, the desire grew stronger and stronger every day, to go to that quiet place away from the city,—they both so longed to see the wide

green fields spreading about them ; the freedom of the forests was better than the pent-up city life.

The will made the way for accomplishment of this darling hope of Pierce and Agnes Dean. They bought the wild farm and removed to it. The sons of the family were growing up to be fine, stalwart boys, and as they increased in stature and strength, their parents began to cherish great hopes for them. John, the eldest, was such a fine, manly fellow, and took to farming so lovingly and heartily. Walter and Alick were such beautiful and dutiful sons, so honorable and upright ; and Dick and Ben were so merry and full of fun ; for all of them, the father and mother were full of hope, and with thankful hearts they recognised the mercy of God, which had given them assurance in their increase of prosperity, that the darling little ones should not be compelled to labor in the factories or mines.

But for the daughter, the little Aurora, she had come, a child of promise, as it were, (for a blessed, though unspoken, promise had with her birth been given,—a promise of inward peace and prosperity, which future years sustained). But the mysterious appearance which had decided the girl's name, had never been made known to her—why, I know not. Pierce and his wife had always hesitated about speaking to her of the dead sister, other than as one wholly dead ; perhaps they feared the effect of such revelation on the young, fragile creature, whose delicate, sensitive, spiritual nature, seemed to them not able to bear the strange tidings they had it in their power to communicate.

As to Pierce himself, intercourse with his departed child seemed never for a day suspended or interrupted, after that night succeeding her burial, when, as a spirit of light and love, she appeared before him. Though to his vision she was never perceivable save by night,—in calm and silent nights chiefly, of the winter time,—still, at other hours, in other places, her gentle voice was forever whispering to him. She seemed even to have taken the form of an impulse within him, which, until her death, had hardly been in its fulness recognised by him,—the principle and the power of Love ! She seemed to have become that principle, and as such the guide of his life. In

moments of passion he heard distinctly her warning voice ; when he was disposed to triumph, or to look with an over-complacent eye on his own improved fortunes, and to think with a little of vain-glorying on those who were less favored, she never failed to speak, and with reproach ; and beneath her steady, wondering glance, the triumphant looks and the exulting thoughts were banished, and in its utterance the passionate word was crushed. Over his inmost thoughts she kept ever strictest watch. He blushed before her purity, when the tempter aroused in him evil reflections ; he wept beneath her gentle glance, when folly had lured him to sin. Guarded and guided by such a spirit, it was not wonderful that Pierce Dean, in the course of time, became a model of excellence. No ; to him and to Agnes, the child was not dead. She lived for them a most active life, ministered to the necessities of their spiritual nature, and in ways numberless blessed them.

Little Aurora was considered a matchless beauty among the people with whom her lot was thrown. When very young, her loveliness was of an order which, while it attracted the admiration of the gazer, also aroused his sympathy. Her form had early reached its full height, was very slight, and bent, as a flower droops, unable to support itself. The countenance might almost have been termed celestial :—the meek, loving, hazel eyes, the complexion white and pure as the lily, the soft, shining, brown hair,—she looked the very spirit of delicacy and grace. With the tenderest interest had this fair, but most fragile, flower, been reared : but, as years passed on, the fond eyes that anxiously watched it beamed with joy ; for strength came to the maiden, the bent form was uplifted, and the glow of health came to her cheek. Then peerless among all beauties stood the farmer's daughter,—young Aurora Dean.

In the course of time this daughter had a lover ;—a suitor exactly to her fancy—after her own heart : the whole world could not have furnished (to her mind) an equal. The father and mother were constrained to look on the youth with great respect and favor, for Gerald Cleff was highborn, and considered the very highest prize in the matrimonial line by all the beau

catchers in the market of that most bustling and intriguing of all little cities on the face of the earth, ———.

Gerald had first met with Aurora at a merry-making in the country at which he chanced to be present. Ever after that blessed night they had done little, either of them, but think and dream of one another. In the lover's eye, there was no city star to compare with his chosen, for beauty, and by degrees it became the unalterable decision of his heart that he would make her Mrs. Cleff.

Yes ! but *the world* must not know of it !

Ah ! Gerald Cleff was a sad rogue after all. He had no idea, with all his devotion, of *completely* sacrificing himself to the country girl ! He would honestly marry her ; but the ceremony must be a private one, unknown to the world, and to his proud and wealthy relatives. Aurora must be content to live, for a few years at least, unacknowledged and in obscurity.

The hesitating and astonished girl had not communicated this selfish proposal to her parents. She loved Gerald too well to willingly listen to the indignant response which she well knew was all the reply they would deign such a proposal. It was a time of sore trial to the innocent, inexperienced child. Her womanly pride and self-respect revolted from the thought that, because a lofty name and great riches were wanting, she was therefore unworthy to be openly, and before all men, known as the bride of Gerald Cleff. Had she listened to the voice of this pride, she had said at once to him, "I am immeasurably above thee already, in spite of thy position and self-glorying, because I recognise in myself a true human being, and thou surely canst not do more." But love forbade her giving utterance to words like these.

Sorrow, such as never had tried her before, had come to Aurora when this declaration of Gerald was made. Her mind was distracted : it wandered from the tasks in which she had been wont to join so cheerfully,—but her trouble gave itself no expression in words.

It was Saturday night, and on the morrow Gerald would be with her ; for Aurora had insisted on giving him no answer

until the week had passed ; then she was to give him her final decision. A long and dreary week, he had said, it would prove to him ; but it was with little fear for the result that he left her, for Gerald was altogether confident in his own powers of persuasion, and would not believe it possible that any woman, at least one of Aurora's rank, could find it in her heart to refuse so great an honor as his hand.

In the quiet and beautiful tranquillity of evening, the troubled girl stole away from the house to the little grove near by,—a pleasant place, where she, with her betrothed, had passed many swiftly-flying hours. As in the stillness of the night she wandered through the many paths, the doubt if it would be really well in her to sacrifice to pride all her deep love, and more generous thoughts towards Gerald began to gain ground. The future, without him, assumed a heavy, lowering aspect. Life, bereft of his presence and sympathy, seemed worthless.

But there was a counsellor, of whose existence she was unaware, near the doubting girl. It was the watchful, guardian elder sister, even Alice Aurora.

Up in the beautifully calm and deep blue sky, her angel presence appeared. She bent down toward the lonely one, and the startled child of earth heard her exclaim, "Aurora, my little sister, I am Alice ;—Alice, thy guardian angel."

With a troubled face then looked up the younger, and said :

"*Who art thou ?*"

"Thou dost not know ? I am Alice,—little Alice once,—Pierce Dean's, thy father's, child. And I died ; but then I became a spirit,—and I watch over thee, and thou art my namesake, Aurora, and I say thou must not marry that young man, Gerald Cleff."

When she heard this authoritative declaration, Aurora bowed down ; she fell, as one lifeless, to the ground. Then came the voice nearer and sweeter than before, sweeter than any tone of music, near as though the speaker stood directly beside her.

"I have loved thee, my gentle sister, for a longer time, and with a tenderer love, than thou hast for this man. I know him better than thou dost, for I have watched him at times when thou couldst not see him, and with all his pride and high notions,

he is not worthy of thee. He is fickle, and vain, and too cold-hearted; he cannot love as thou dost; he will disappoint his wife. What wilt thou answer him in the morning, when he comes?"

There was no reply.

"Dost thou doubt me, Aurora? Shall I tell thee about thy brothers and mine, who have been so long away? Of Alick, from whom you have not heard for so long?—of Walter and of John?—for I *can* tell of them. Would it prove to you that I am worthy to be heard?"

Still there was no answer.

"Aurora!—my love, my darling!—look up!—only speak! Do as thou wilt; I may not urge thee more."

These words, so mournfully spoken, Aurora could not withstand. She did not rise from her humble posture, but, still kneeling there, raised her eyes towards the heavens, and cried: "As thou wilt have me, will I do. Alice, I shall not wed with Gerald. I will tell him that on the morrow."

And with a heavier heart than she had ever borne, the maiden returned to the house, but not till she had heard the blessing and assurance of future tranquillity from her elder sister's lips.

And so—and so,—after all, the beautiful Aury became, by resolve, an—old maid!

It was towards evening, the next day, that Gerald Cleff sought Aurora in her home. He came to her with smiling countenance, looking never so irresistible before, little dreaming of what awaited him. Together the young couple sought the often-frequented grove, and, gaily humming the song,—

"Oh, when the moon and stars are bright,
When the dew-drops glisten,
Then their vows should lovers plight,
Then should ladies listen,"—

Gerald bent down in the shade, and, with a smile that had little of fear in it, bade Aurora pronounce his doom.

"Wilt thou wed me, Aurora, and be mine own for ever?"

"Yes!" answered she quietly and firmly; "yes, I will wed

thee, Gerald, if thou holdest me worthy to be acknowledged thy wife before the world. Not else!"

"Worthy! oh, incomparably so! Thou art as a queen to the foolish, vain, and selfish people who surround me where I live. But thou knowest not the world. Want of riches and high birth are not trifling things, and, alas! worldly women, and men, too, know many ways by which to convince the humbler classes of their inferiority. Thou art simple and innocent, and dost not know the world. It is not worthy of you; and, dearest, I can never consent to expose *you* to the scorn, or coldness, or slight, of people a thousand times inferior to yourself in virtue, in beauty, and goodness."

"Nay, then," said Aurora, in that same gentle, but measured and slightly sarcastic tone, "as thou hast said, I *do* know but little of the world, but what thou sayest seems very strange to me. Would people *dare* to so treat *thy* wife? Couldst thou not shield her from neglect or insult? Methinks a man *honored* by his fellows would stand in no danger of having his wife so exposed. I had not thought *this* was the way of the world."

Gerald reddened as Aurora spoke thus, and said, sharply,

"It is a poor, weak love of which thou dost boast! *True* love delights in sacrifices—but thou!—thou art not content to live even one little year apart with me. Thy woman's head must be turned with vanity. Thou dost long most, confess it, Aurora, to shine among the city dames!"

Aurora stood and gazed upon him, as he spoke thus, in surprise. She trembled, and her face grew very pale, but she had firmness to control her voice, and she said, calmly—

"It is time for you to go back;—the city air best befits you. Go, and in peace, if that be possible, Gerald."

As she uttered his name, Aurora felt her strength giving way. With rapid steps she fled back to her home; and spell-bound, without the power to call her back, the recreant gazed after her.

And the silent night rolled on,—the stars shone bright as ever, and the spirit of Alice restlessly flitted over the sea of heaven, and found no abiding-place. For through the long hours the younger daughter of Pierce Dean wept in bitterness of

anguish; and full of remorse, the lover hastened away to his city residence.

Years passed on, and great sorrow was not spared the happy household of Pierce Dean. John, the eldest child, who was becoming a thriving merchant in a little town near where his father dwelt, died suddenly, while all the home circle were cherishing the fondest hopes of him. The blow was a heavy one to the old parents; it told even more deeply on them than did the death of little Alice, years ago, but the grievous affliction extorted no cry of complaint or impatience. Faith, and a submission to the Almighty will, were having in Pierce and Agnes, even in that dreadful hour when news of their bereavement was brought them,—a perfecting work.

Walter Dean, the youngest of the three who had gone forth to seek their fortunes in the world, with firmness of purpose rarely seen in one so young, had at once bound himself apprentice to a mechanic. In both the sons, Walter and Alick, there were hidden powers to do and to be, of which neither was fully aware when they dwelt under the parent roof, and which had never been even suspected by the honest father and mother.

More than a common love for nature, more than ordinary reverence for things simple, beautiful, and pure, distinguished Walter. He had the poet's sensitive nature; in him it was united to a strong, healthful frame, that could battle manfully with the world's storms; and his mild, dreamy eye, which, at times, in moments of excitement, would flash intensest scorn on the myriad forms of human folly and guilt, fully revealed what sort of spirit was in him. With a hopeful heart, Walter labored at his chosen trade,—that of a goldsmith; and his quick perception of the beautiful, his nice taste, added to that desire after perfection in all his works, lightened all his labors;—made them pleasant in themselves. And it was not long ere, from the great shop of the delighted employer, specimens of the most perfect workmanship were sent forth, that were designed and finished by Walter Dean.

The young jeweller's reputation as a master of his craft, went

abroad far and wide. The place where he labored was thronged with customers:—the fair and the beautiful, and the keen-eyed men of trade. The jeweller's fortune, and that of his apprentice, was made.

But this was not the notoriety which the young workman most coveted. There were other labors carried on, in silence and in secrecy, to accomplish which, hours of the night were given. And they were not dreary or lonely hours; for, ever hovering over the little table where he wrote, was the blessed spirit of Alice, the Aurora who came to brighten his darkest hours.

She it was who soothed him in disappointment, who encouraged him to renewed labor, when dismayed and cast down by repeated failure. She it was who aided him in giving glorious setting and finish to the jewels which flashed and burned in the chambers of his mind.

And it was so, that the words of power, so melodiously breathed forth by Walter Dean, aroused and charmed every hearer. Men would endure his words of scorn for wrong-doing, nay, even applaud him, and the prophet was in no danger of being disregarded in his own country and generation.

Astonishingly forgetful that the man who spoke such burning and such soul-arousing truths toiled by day at a craft to support his body's necessities, nobles, and rich and powerful people, clasped his hands, and called him brother, and praised him—but they could not spoil. For when, in moments of triumphant joy, he would pace his room alone, and think over, in delight, the plaudits of the multitude, there was ever a voice nigh to him which bade him beware lest his exultation should prove his ruin. And Walter was wise to heed the warning words; for worldly prosperity, while it exalted him, even in his youth, to the station in social life which the qualities of his mind and heart well fitted him to fill, never made him forgetful that he was neither more nor less than man; that all which he had wrought or could hope to accomplish, was only through the mercy and love of Him without whose favor and aid all must work in vain.

Alick Dean's nature was cast in a mould akin to that of Walter.

From boyhood had been floating dreams and images of

beauty over his mind, which, in his early years, he never dared dream had other existence than in his imagination. As he grew older, he became a taciturn, gloomy youth; for the undefined hopes to which he clung had only power to torment him; he saw no possibility of ever bringing anything of worth from the chaotic state of his mind. He *knew* nothing then of painting, as the glorious art which after years showed it to him. Least of all did he ever think to accomplish anything to compete with the wonderful achievements of the great artists of whom he read.

When Alick left home, the hearts of the parents yearned after him. They were troubled for him:—there was not that stability in him which marked John and Walter; he was not strong to withstand temptation; they feared the result of his struggle with the world. And not without reason; for to ordinary kinds of labor he had always shown himself decidedly averse and incompetent.

With a reckless love for novelty, and desire to mingle in new scenes and among strange faces, the boy pushed his way southward, till the liberal portion of money with which his father had supplied him was well-nigh exhausted. Then he was compelled to pause, and think what he would do next. But it was thinking to little purpose, till, one day, he chanced to visit the National Gallery of paintings in ——. Gazing on the many splendid pictures there, it seemed to him that he had of a sudden found entrance to a world more splendid than imagination could have conceived. The key was found that opened the portal to his confused mind, and, in the floods of light which poured in, he could see and understand how all these wonder-works had been accomplished. But feasting his mind on these dainty things was an indulgence too great: Alick felt it was (for one in his situation), many a night, when, faint and exhausted with fasting and excitement, he sought his poor lodgings. Looking on the finest specimens of art would not furnish him with meat and drink; admiration of the beautiful would not keep him warm, and defend him against the blasts of winter. Alick must *exert* himself. Haunted with this thought, which every day pressed more and more heavily upon him, he

returned to his lodgings, one night, fully determined that on the morrow he would, in labor of some kind, set about earning a living. With a heavy heart was this resolution made; for the first time, almost, since leaving home, a sense of desolateness oppressed him. As he murmured his prayers rapidly, he thought, with tears of grief, of his mother, when he had first announced his resolve to seek his fortune abroad, as his brothers before had done. He recalled her parting kiss,—her trembling “God bless you, my son; try to be firm; do not yield to temptation;”—and more heartily than ever, in that moment, he resolved to be firm,—to put a curb on his fiery temper,—to subdue his love for wild scenes of gaiety and pleasure. But one by one these thoughts passed; and when Alick’s eyes closed in sleep, the last image reflected on his brain was that of the exquisite “Madonna,” on which, nearly all the past bright day, he had gazed and gazed.

In the “noon of night” he was wakened from his sleep, by no human voice or hand, though he could have sworn that a voice was calling him. But Alick smiled even as he so thought:—it was only a bright light on the wall opposite him, from a neighboring window, perhaps, or it might have been the moon; so he turned over, and would have slept again. But again that whispering voice, calling to him, “Brother Alick!” In alarm he started up, rushed to the window, and threw it open; but the brightness was soon enough explained, when he looked into the north, and saw how the heavens were glowing with splendid light. It seemed to him the Spirits’ gala night, so brilliant were those swift-moving forms, dancing through the halls of glory. But brighter and brighter grew that light within his own room. It seemed a moving image;—and, hark! it certainly spoke again!—it said:

“Alick, dearest!—my wild, brave brother Alick!—be firm and patient. There is a way discovered in which thou mayest labor with glory and with profit. Thou needst not renounce thy dream.” And while the boy stood motionless with amazement, the image faded softly away; when he looked out again upon the night, the heavens were reft of the visible spirits, and silently and solemnly the stars were shining.

Precious were the dreams of Alick Dean, during the remaining hours of that night. Refreshed and hopeful arose he on the morning of the day, which, he fully believed, would see the seal set to his destiny. But, before he went to seek employment of the tradesmen or mechanics, he must look once more on the "Madonna." And trusting himself before that, he should not have ventured to promise himself one hour of the day.

A stranger to the boy (as indeed were all they who daily frequented the Gallery) had on other occasions gazed with somewhat curious eyes on the youth who so many times stood in rapt admiration before the "Madonna." The man could not repress the deep and growing interest he felt in the fine-looking, but poorly-clad boy; and on this particular morning he felt himself irresistibly drawn towards him;—for the worshippers of art recognise the spiritual bond which unites them one to another, and the elder person now was the one first to interpret the meaning of the impulse which urged him to seek the acquaintance of the youth.

When he stood by Alick, looking with him on the exquisite pictured face, he made some critical observation of the painting, and the words drew forth an answer which added another seal to the destiny of the boy.

"You have the eye of a painter, my lad. Have you ever paid much attention to the art?"

There was a choking sensation in Alick's throat as he thought of the last night's vision, and listened to these words. He replied that all the knowledge he had of art was his study of the paintings in the Gallery, which had occupied most of his time since arriving in —.

"What is your business here?" was the next abrupt question.

"I came to seek employment, but am ashamed to confess I've made but little headway, having contrived to lose my time and wits in this enchanted place."

"Had you ever an idea of becoming an artist?"

"I had never seen a picture, sir, till I came to this place, a few days ago. But I think if it were possible for me to know the joyous feeling with which a painting like *this* before us must have been finished, I should be quite willing to die."

"You have certainly enthusiasm enough to become a proficient. If you would like to get an insight into the business, come to my rooms this afternoon. I am an artist;—we will see what can be made of you. It is very fortunate for me if you are the boy I take you to be, for I am much in need of fresh hands just now." And passing on, the gentleman gave his card to Alick. It was the painter of the Madonna;—the name traced upon the card was that of one of the most famous artists of his day, known not less for his genius as a painter, than for his kindness of heart and his generous anxiety to aid all who would perfect themselves in his beautiful art.

The road was at last fairly opened to our dreamer, and with a step that never wearied, with a hand that never faltered, and an eye that never failed him, he went on "conquering and to conquer," surprising all who watched his career, save only himself. His heart was set high, and when others applauded, he knew what his lips would not utter, that he had not yet wrought that of which he was capable. The companions of Alick were not at all times such as the pure and exalted mind of Walter Would have chosen. Chance threw him in the way of some whose friendship he had not always the moral courage to forego, whose influence was anything but good. Led away at times by these, the student-artist would indulge in the wildest excesses, and, by his carelessness and prodigality, degrade the dignity of his profession. But days and weeks of remorse invariably succeeded these transgressions, and Alice was then constantly with him, imploring him to "forsake the error of his ways." And she did not in the end plead vainly; for as the boy grew older, the moral principle within him increased in strength, the hours of dissipation became less and less frequent, and his application to the study of a beauty which has the tendency to purify and exalt human nature, betrayed itself in increased moral excellence.

There was a picture on which Alick was expending incredible patience, time, and care; and there were rumors which spread extensively among all the *patrons* of art, that this production would surpass in beauty and real merit all to be shown at the great annual exhibition in the National Gallery. One only per

son had been permitted to see the picture ;—that was Alick's master ; and he had seen it but once ;—and it was rumored that he had wept tears of joy when he beheld the work ; also, that on questioning the youth as to where he had caught the idea of anything so beautiful, the simply earnest answer of the student was, "This is the spirit of little Alice, my sister and guardian angel ; she died in childhood, but I have seen her since."

The day of exhibition came, but young Alick Dean was nowhere to be seen, and the eyes of the multitude searched in vain among the treasures of genius which lined the walls, for the "Alice Aurora."

Where was the artist then ? He had toiled day and night over that canvas, giving birth with his colors to the beautiful ideal. Had sickness seized on him in the moment of triumph ? Nay. But, the night when the great work was completed, the shining presence stood again in Alick's room. It hovered around that wondrously beautiful work of his own hands, and the young man listened with humble reverence for the words the blessed sprite should speak :—and Alice had bidden him do other with the glowing canvas than place it where the throng would come to gaze upon it, and to praise. How did the artist listen to the words of his inspirer ? Was it hard for him to forego the applause of the great city ? Was it painful to renounce the hope of winning the splendid prize offered for the most successful work of art ?

No ; it was with a *joyous* heart that he bound the wrappings that very night about his treasured work, and prepared to set out with the early dawn for the home of his father and his mother, in the distant north. And now, as he thought of this long-contemplated journey in the near prospect of accomplishment, Alick felt that the smile and the kiss of his mother, the grateful blessing of his father, would more fully repay him for what he had done, than all the false-hearted gratulations and applause which the gay city had to offer. And so it was with a heart that grew every moment more joyous and light, that he set out on his return home.

In all these years which it had taken to build up their son's

name, Pierce and Agnes Dean had not remained the same vigorous, sturdy farmers they were when their boys first set out in quest of fortune and adventure. Anxiety for the fate of Walter and Alick, during the ten years of absence,—the hard labor of their earlier years,—had tended to whiten the hair and furrow the faces of the good old people. But gentle, kind, and loving still was Agnes; and Pierce, in his age, though somewhat whimsical (if the truth must be told,) was as forbearing, patient, and hopeful, as could have been expected. And what had become of Aurora?

It is two years since Gerald Cleff, on that night of bereavement to her (and also himself,) had proved so disloyal to true love, so unworthy to claim her for his bride. Yes; two years of as great sorrow to himself as to her had they proved. Shortly after that night of their parting, he had gone abroad; but a consciousness (exaggerated, perhaps) of all he had lost in her, shame for his own madness and selfishness, went with him. The foreign lands he visited were nothing to him. His thoughts, his inclinations, were all elsewhere. Continually they fled backward, attracted by an irresistible magnet. By degrees Aurora's name itself become all in all to him; but he dared not return to her,—dared not seek her and fling himself and his pride at her feet, to crave forgiveness. Ay! pride failed him then: she would not lift her voice to disprove the convictions of conscience.

But at last Gerald returned to his native land,—to the city where he had formerly lived,—to the neighborhood of Aurora. He learned then that she was still unmarried, that she lived with her parents, that she was more beautiful than ever, but sad and silent, mingling never with the young and the gay. This account pleased him; he could but think that she still remembered him, but whether it was to deplore the weakness of one who had once won her love, or because she still cherished a memory of him with tenderness and forgiveness, he could not tell,—but he must know.

It was exactly two years since that night when they parted in the little grove, that Gerald Cleff sought Aurora Dean there once more;—sought her with hope and with fear, determined to take it as a good omen if he found her in the place which was

hallowed to him by many a remembrance, dear as the last was bitter. And—she *was* there, dear reader, and—and—why, —Alice the angel blessed them (why should not we?) when, after one startled look of recognition, one joyous smile, but without an uttered word, the two embraced one another.

There was joy in farmer Dean's home that night, for there had been unexpected arrivals there. First came a stranger gentleman with a lady, who, with smiles and tears, called upon their parents to bless them, bringing with them tokens that the world, called so selfish and so cold, had dealt well by them. How cordially the two young farmer-brothers, Dick and Ben, took Walter by the hand, and welcomed him back again; with what pride they looked on him, knowing by the tokens of late oftentimes sent them, of the wreaths of honor which men delighted to lay upon his head—how gladly they greeted Walter's beautiful young wife,—how tenderly the old lady embraced her lovely new-found daughter—and how old Pierce's heart leaped within him for very joy, as he looked upon the handsome children who had come to ask his blessing!

Then, after these had been welcomed, there had come another, a ten years' stranger to that roof, the glorious artist Alick, bringing with him his ardent love, and his splendid gift. And how they crowded round to take his hand, when they were assured it was really himself! Oh, it was beautiful to see the long-parted, gifted brothers, standing clasped in such warm embrace,—beautiful to witness the just pride with which age-dimmed eyes looked on those glorious youths—mournfully pleasant to hear them speak so tenderly of the buried John,—and then to hear the newly arrived inquiring, but hesitatingly, as though they dreaded to hear of another bereavement, after their darling Aurora. Even as they asked she came, beautiful as the poet's dream, or the painter's ideal. Ten years had wrought as wonderful a change in her as in themselves, yet the brothers seemed hardly prepared to meet a woman so incomparably lovely, in the place of the timid, obliging little sister they had left at home. Gerald Cleff was with Aurora when she entered—and the perfect satisfaction visible in his face, told very plainly that he had

improved the hour passed to the utmost. Ah, the youth needed not to draw himself up very proudly, as those sons of genius in days afterwards took him by the hand to hail him brother—he might well have thought twice, *then*, as to whether he were really worthy to be old Pierce Dean's son! He surely needed not to imagine (and he did not,) that he should be lessened in the eyes of his people, when they knew that he had chosen for his bride the beautiful sister of Alick and Walter Dean!

The joy that filled the father's heart that night, was more than he could bear. His happiness was so great it stifled him—it seemed to him that he could not breathe, so he went out into the cool air, and paced the little garden.

But, presently, before his absence was noticed, he came again to the door, and said, "Agnes—children, come out here."

They obeyed him,—it was a lovely sight (the poet and the painter thought so;) the aged parents, their united and joyful family, all glowing with health and happiness, and standing in the presence of their Guardian Angel! For, lo! Alice Aurora was there—she beheld their joy! Pointing up towards the sky, Pierce said, "My children, it is meet that *to-night* we acknowledge the tie which has bound us together in years of separation: is not this spirit before us, she who has incited us to become what we are? Love has united us in want and in sorrow, she shall unite us forever!"

The old man paused, and such a heartfelt, unanimous "yea," never went forth, as from that garden ascended to where their Alice stood. And the Spirit of Love, doubtless, met its own exceeding great reward, when those two youths, whom the world revered, told, with voices not quite unfaltering, of all that angel sister had been to them; and when they had finished each his story, so full of interest to the listeners, in the silence Aurora pressed the hand of Gerald, and whispered, "What she has done for *me*, thou only shalt know!"—and Gerald replied thankfully, "She has been my guide, also, and has led me here, to bless me, the least worthy of you all."

"Father! mother!" exclaimed Alick, as the bright shadows of the spirits faded from the sky, "come within—I will show you wherefore I am here."

Then led he the way into the house, to reveal to them the wondrous work his hand had wrought—and oh, the smoke-stained room looked glorious as a palace, when that grand achievement graced its humble wall—and the dreams that were dreamed by the gathered household that night, were of never-departing beauty, because, reader,

*That home and that heart is always blessed, over which the
Aurora of pure love has risen!*

THE PHŒBE BIRD.

"Life! what *is* life? To breathe happily and joyfully?"—MISS BREMER.

A LITTLE creature, winged and feathered, has built its nest this spring-time in a giant tree, near by, and from morning till night it repeats its plaintive cry, "Phœ-be, Phœ-be!" a mournful cry and call which the lonely bird seems destined to have never answered. A cry and call which, ringing in my ear continually, suggests somewhat which is here *as* mournfully submitted.

Professor Sweete married, late in life, a beautiful young girl, to whom he became suddenly and devotedly attached. Dora Hopkins was poor, an artist, a miniature-painter. When the Professor, yielding to the long and urgent solicitations of a friend, engaged her to take his likeness, he had not the slightest idea of ever making a plea that she would take his heart also; and yet, before the lady-painter's work was done, he had accomplished all this,—had won a love grateful, ardent, and devoted, and then what a matter of wonderment was it to the good, honest soul, that he should ever have been able to exist without such love!

For thirty years he had lived among his books, had sought for his companions only studious, silent men. The secrets of science, the depths of philosophy, the wonders of nature had been the subjects of his life-long study and contemplation, rather than the secrets, and depths, and wonders of human hearts. He had cultivated his intellect to the utmost, and yet not entirely at the expense of his more human nature—the Professor had

in her natural endowments. In his youth her father had run through his large possessions, and the mother's reserved portion barely sufficed to educate her daughters. Louise was the youngest, and last unmarried of these; she was a lady of winning manners, and well educated mind, therefore was fitted to win the respect of the Professor, without which, indeed, he had not given her his love.

The mother of this lady had succeeded in securing good establishments for her elder daughters, and was overjoyed to receive, in behalf of her youngest, the advances of a man who stood so high in the world's estimation as this suitor. She cared not so much for wealth in this instance; she knew Professor Sweete had it not—but a distinguished name was the next most desirable thing; and accordingly her daughter became the widower's wife.

But in the heart of Mrs. Louise there was wanting all that confidence which had been the great charm, the secret tie, of the first union. The new wife's awe for her husband was nearly synonymous with fear. His name had been associated for years, in her mind, with great and high, but also with stern and loveless thoughts: when she was a child, he had been her instructor—she had conned the books he wrote, and never could she rid herself of that idea, which children invariably have of a strong-minded, intellectual teacher. She could never, try as she might, receive him, or be to him a companion in the dearest sense of the word, a companion such as Dora had been—she could never see in him a lover, the most familiar, the nearest of all friends. Yet was such companionship in the husband's mind for her; he truly admired Louise, and it was with the sincerest grief that he at last became convinced he must forever knock at the door of his wife's heart in vain.

And then and therefore it was, that he, who for the love of woman would have renounced the lonely paths of study; having discovered that the golden fruit would ripen for him no more, returned again to his books, to his silent work—becoming once again a grave, reserved, and thoughtful man.

Two children, a daughter whom they called Dora Louise,

and a son, Norman, were in course of years added to the household.

In Dora, as time passed, was unfolded all the passionate nature, all the impulsiveness that lay hid beneath the mother's cold exterior. She was full of health, and "fair to see"—a lively, laughing girl to take one's heart by storm—to be loved after such conquest fervently, despite her glaring faults.

The daughters of this house were living witnesses of their mothers. Soul-witnesses, indeed, for sweet young Phœbe Sweete did not inherit the personal loveliness of her parent, nor was little Dora a *fac simile* of Louise. The patience, meekness, generosity, bodily weakness and intellectual strength of the eldest, was in no more striking contrast with the thoughtlessness, wilfulness, pride, and passionate lovingness of the younger sister, than was the physical development of each. The dark hair, and full, expressive eyes, the blooming countenance, joyous face, and rapid movements of the life-loving Dora, had not one faint semblance in the pale face of the frail, invalid-child Phœbe. They were children to be greatly loved, because they appealed for love so strongly, though in very different ways, the one preferring always a claim, the other a petition that was looked rather than asked, for the affection of others: they were children to be tenderly and prayerfully guarded, because of the great tendency in the nature of each for much that is hurtful and dangerous.

The father's heart had always turned with peculiar tenderness towards his eldest child. An infirmity, springing from an accident, (that happened to her shortly after her mother's death,) and fostered by uncommon natural weakness, had resulted in incurable lameness, and aside from the pitying love this misfortune drew towards the girl, the Professor felt that she was, indeed, motherless. Mrs. Sweete was too well bred, she had too much respect for herself, and for her husband, to become ever the tyrant of a young and gentle child—but she never loved the little Phœbe, and never had for her any protestations of affection. She was the guardian of the girl, never suffered her to want for any one comfort,—she had too much of common humanity to be capable ever, of harshness, to one so patient

and so mild. She was strictly honorable, and conscientious, in all her dealings with the oldest daughter. But the father looked, and he knew that there was a cruelty just as extreme, *more* torturing, to a sensitive soul, than the tyranny of physical strength, because from it no appeal can be made. And he knew that Phœbe suffered from it. He read it in the mute but constant, and to him most affecting appeals her eyes made for a love like that the mother lavished on Dora and on Norman, which was wild in its excess, for the pent-up devotion of the woman was given *all* to them—he read it in the silence, the constraint, the sadness of the lonely girl, and as he read, he took the dead wife's child more tenderly to his heart, resolving that he would be father and mother to her, knowing that it was his duty to let her find in him a full answer to the love-cry of her heart.

So it was that her education was conducted solely by him, who in his tenderness feared that others would unfold less judiciously than himself, or unwittingly tax too far, the young girl's mind—the mind whose powers he proudly recognised—which was so precious in his sight. Dora Louise, at the age of four years, also became her father's pupil, and the two children studied then from the same book, read from the same page, and wrote at the same table: Phœbe did this, though much in advance of her sister, in order to encourage her, and Louise needed this encouragement, for even as she grew older, she evinced no manner of aptness for the acquisition of knowledge.

The children had never been christened, but the child of Louise had always been called Dora, for the Professor felt that in giving this name to her, he bound his household together, the living and the dead, in the tenderest tie. No opposition was made to this. Mrs. Sweete never opposed, in any one thing, the expressed wish of her husband: all had followed the father's example in naming the little girl, but he learned a bitter lesson, one day, when calling her to repeat her morning hymn she exclaimed, "You must not call me Dory, father, mamma says I am her little Louise."

A sudden and a sharp pang shot through his heart as he heard this; for a moment, grief and anger silenced him; but when he called the child again, he only said quietly, though

with unusual sternness, "Yes, yes, you *are* Louise—that shall be your name."

And that very evening the baptismal service was read in the Professor's parlor; for the father had suddenly announced the wish that his children should be christened at once. He offered no reason for this to his wife, merely stated his determination; but she did not need to be told more when the clergyman took *her* child, to "sign her with the sign of the cross" and called her only Louise, while conjoined with Phœbe's name, was that of the dead Dora!

Phœbe was ten years old, when her father led her one day into a room, whose doors never opened save to himself. It had been his first wife's bridal-chamber, the room in which she died: and when he took another bride, he resolved that this place should be consecrated to the memory of the dead—that the daughter of his lost companion alone, should ever occupy it. And this wish, which was from the first made known to Louise, had been constantly complied with; because it was a sacred place to her husband, it became so to her, and she was far from being jealous of his devotion to the departed—had she not also her love—*her children?*

It was a large, and simply, yet prettily furnished apartment; a pleasant place, whose windows commanded the loveliest prospect. Many hours of study and reflection had the Professor passed here alone in silence, and unseen by mortals, here he had wept, and prayed—here he had struggled—here he had gained victories. To the children, this room was associated with awful thoughts, and always passed in silence—they had an idea that a ghost lived there, or that some strange thing had happened in the closed chamber. When, therefore, Phœbe now for the first time crossed the threshold, it was with trembling; but when the door was closed behind her, and she found herself standing with her father in such a pleasant place, fear vanished in an instant.

The old man sat down in a large arm-chair, and took her fondly in his arms, as though cognizant of her thoughts, and with whispering voice he said:

"This was you mother's room, my child," and the tears he shed fell fast and warm upon her upturned face.

"Yes, father," she said, as softly, laying her hand in his. The touch seemed to inspire him with fresh strength, and he continued speaking, still very low,—

"I have brought you here because this is now *your* room: it is a sacred place, your mother died here—it shall be your study now, and when you will, *Dora*, you may come here."

She only kissed him in answer, her heart was too full for words, but he knew the meaning of the grateful, fervent embrace.

"Your mother was an artist," he continued, scanning her face intently as though he would read her inmost thoughts. "She painted portraits for people, I will show you some of her work; she was a gifted woman."

The girl's eyes, those soft brown eyes, actually glowed, as she listened to these words—a fire seemed to illumine them—she slid from his arms, and the Professor arose, and opened, with a key which he gave to Phœbe, the upper drawer of a bureau.

"This was very like your mother," he said, taking out a small miniature, "she painted it herself. You are not so beautiful as she."

"No, father," was the girl's answer, when she had looked quietly on the picture for many moments, "but she was *good*, and you loved her *for that*. I will be good, you will love me?"

"I love you always, my blessed child," was the fervent answer; and then the old man took from the drawer a casket filled with ornaments, and there was in it, also, a long braid of beautiful, brown hair. He gave her that, laying it round her neck; it was but a shade darker than the child's, and of the same soft, silky texture. She took it in her hand, and said,

"I cannot *wear* it yet, father, I will look at it every day, and then, I know it is mine! Oh, it is so good in you to let me have a mother, for it seems as though you had given me a mother here, to-day."

"Is it so, darling? it is what I thought, all I hoped when I brought you here!"

"Won't you let *me* learn to paint? I have always thought so

much about it! isn't it strange? I thought I would ask you, some day, to let me learn to paint." She fixed those Dora-eyes longingly on her father, as though fearful of refusal.

"You would be an artist! Why?"

"It must be so beautiful to know such work—and mother was an artist,—and father—I *must* work."

"And *why*, still? Why must *you* work?"

"I love so to look at pictures, and you know I am lame; I am not like other children; and I want something to do, that I can do always."

"You *shall* learn, my darling little girl!"

"Here, father?"

"Yes, *here*."

And now into this silent place often came the young girl, to read and to think, and then to con those lessons which the artist gave her. And that she really did inherit all her mother's genius, the delighted Professor could not doubt when he saw the ardor with which the no longer spiritless girl pursued her work, and noticed the fineness of touch, the finish and beauty of coloring, which characterized her labors. The artist who instructed her was astonished at the rapid progress she made—and he was prouder than his pupil of her success. He watched as she worked, and knew that true genius inspired her—he watched her with enthusiasm, and envied her when he looked on the results of her labors—envied, until his eyes turned from the ivory to her pale face, and saw the happy expression which lighted up the delicate features—envied, till she would arise and move at that slow, difficult pace, and *then* he felt generously grateful to God for her, and for her rejoicing, proud old father, that such a blessed gift of genius had been assured to her.

One day, when Phoebe had just finished a likeness of Louise, on which she had bestowed much care, and which she intended a gift for Mrs. Sweete, she sat gazing on her work, and on her sister, satisfying herself that it was a perfect resemblance. The boy and the girl stood beside her, they had been often with her during the progress of this work, and the fact that they were to keep its subject and its object a secret, had all along given them

a great consciousness of importance. They whispered now their praise loudly as they dared, and the boy, in his admiration waxing bold, ventured on what he felt to be forbidden ground—he said aloud,

“Sister Phoebe, do tell us what makes you so *quiet* here always; and why do you stay here alone so?”

Louise looked up into her sister’s face very appealingly, as Norman said this, and though she did not speak, she looked her curiosity.

Taking the boy in her arms, Phoebe said,

“It was my mother’s room, dear Norman; it is a sacred place to me.”

“Then it’s my mamma’s room, too, and I can make just as much noise here as I choose. Huzzah! why don’t mamma stay here, then?”

“No, Norman, *her* mamma died, and then father married *our* mamma, that’s it. Sister Phoebe, what is in that bureau?”

“Some of my dear mother’s clothes and things,” answered Phoebe, after a moment’s hesitation. “Please go away now; go softly; I must be alone.”

They started to obey her, and then Louise turned back a step and whispered, “Won’t you let me look in that bureau?”

“No, Louise—not now—go, *please* go.”

And the children obeyed at once. They had been taught by mother, as well as father, to always heed their sister’s directions; for Mrs. Sweete, if she did not love the girl, had in her full confidence, and reason taught her that no other companion could prove so beneficial to her headstrong children, as the mild and patient Phoebe. Indeed, they had for her almost as much of respect and regard, as for their mother—they would obey her as soon, would serve her as gladly. The two girls were very dear to each other, and Norman was the pet of all; with Phoebe as with the rest; but her love differed from that of the parents, for she could see his faults, and while others were blind, or winked at them, it was her endeavor to make him also alive to them.

The day after the likeness of little Louise was finished, the young artist went to her studio to prepare materials for taking

one of the lad; she found him there, and for the first time, to her knowledge, he had entered that sanctuary without seeking her permission. He stood before the bureau, that treasure-house, (to her!) gazing intently upon the miniature of Dora Sweete. The contents of the drawer, the jewels, and the laces, not costly, but to the daughter inestimably precious, were thrown about in confusion; and the braid of hair, which she had never yet deemed herself worthy to wear! alas, what desecration! the thoughtless boy had a dozen times severed it, fastening the braids around his tiny wrists; bracelets more valuable to her who looked on them, than had they been of diamonds.

When she entered the room, her first thought was to avoid surprising Norman; she would only gently reprove him; but in such a way that he would be sure to never trespass again in like manner; but when she saw that treasured remembrance of her mother thus despoiled, Phœbe lost all thought, save of her own sorrowful misfortune—she wept aloud. The boy started, as if a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet, and when he saw his sister weeping so violently, without the least power of control, between fear and astonishment, he stood motionless. He made no attempt to escape, but waited like a culprit, anticipating some sentence from his judge, and it came at last. The sister stood up, trembling with the weakness which followed her violent grief; she moved slowly towards her brother, and clasping his hands, knelt down, unfastened the bracelets, and laid them quietly away.

"You have grieved me more than I can ever tell you," she said; "you have almost destroyed what was the most precious of all things to me. Norman, why how *could* you do so?"

"*You* did not wear it," he muttered at last, "and it was so pretty!"

"And you had everything in the world; it was my mother's hair—didn't you know it? Oh, Norman!"

He could not bear it, to see her sinking again prostrate in her sorrow: lifting her head, he kissed the tear-wet face again and again, whispering over and over, "forgive me, oh *do* forgive me, Phœbe," till she did forgive him.

He never went into that chamber again—no other member

of the household ever heard a word of the transaction, but from that day Norman loved Phœbe better than he loved any other human being, Louise, his constant playmate, not excepted; and he never in his life could forget, or forgive himself for having made her weep.

The extraordinary gift of genius which had as by accident been developed in the eldest daughter, excited much of her step-mother's interest, and she began to manifest unusual attention towards the young creature. It was with great gladness that the Professor noticed this. He longed to see the tie of mother and child linking together these dearly-loved beings, yet he could not deceive himself into the belief that his wife lavished on the poor lame girl any of that warm, and devoted affection, which she gave her own: and when he saw, at last, that the genius of Phœbe had been powerful to awaken in the mind of the step-mother only that feeling of admiration and respect, which he knew was her feeling for *him*, he learned—to be satisfied with it.

But the daughter! She in that silent room had found all that in extreme sorrow she had longed for in her earliest youth—a mother's love! She felt it encircling her, an atmosphere cheering and exalting, in that sanctuary where she was born, and where her mother died—she felt it warming her heart when it was most chilled and lonely, nerving her hand in weariness,—a constant benediction—a perpetual spring of peace. A very happy girl was she then. The smile of approval and the affectionate words her father gave to her so freely out of his rich, full heart—the love of Louise and Norman, these were hers, and together with the glorious work given her to do, how pleasant was her life made. Silent, and pale, a cripple was she still, but there was no sadness in her soul; peace, satisfaction, contentment, these lived there instead.

Louise was fourteen years old when *her* mother died; Phœbe had just passed her eighteenth year, and Norman his twelfth. Mrs. Sweete died suddenly, even as the first wife did, after only a few days of illness. The promise of many years, of a long life, seemed hers: she was, apparently, in perfect health the morning of that day when the disease prostrated her, and in

delirium her sickness passed. The last words she uttered while her reason was yet clear, were those spoken just after her attack, when she gave Louise and Norman smilingly into Phœbe's charge, begging her to find some evening occupation for them.

It was a life-long charge, and so the elder sister felt it to be, when the lady died without giving another. And the duty of a mother, as she, poor child, imagined it, she always industriously fulfilled.

After the mother's death, though Phœbe still continued her studies, and was guided by her father in them, she was no longer his pupil, in the sense she had been, as Louise and Norman still were. A great idea of being independent was taking strong hold in her mind, and knowing full well that her parent's means were limited, she resolved to become a professional artist, as her mother had been—she would work for *pay*. No mention of this wish or intention was made to the father, nor to any other, till the first work was really sold, and then she no longer concealed from him, to whom her heart was as an open book, the strong desire she cherished, and to this wish the Professor wisely acceded.

But about this time, (shortly after his wife's death,) a strange sickness began to overpower the Professor's energies. From a strong, energetic, healthful man, he became, as it were, instantaneously broken. His mind lost its high tone—his cheerfulness fled—he became a prey to deep-seated melancholy. It was sadder to look on his smile then, than it had been to behold him weep—it was too like a wan stream of sunlight illumining a sepulchre—a moonbeam lighting up the face of the dead! In vain did Phœbe, relinquishing her own tasks, now entirely devote herself to him—most of the time he seemed utterly unconscious of her presence, yet when she was away from him his constant cry was, "Phœ-be, Phœ-be," like that of the bird whose nest is in the giant elm near by, whose dreary cry seems doubly sad to me this dark, miserable day.

It was with infinite terror that the daughter watched the progress of this most strange disease. It was not like the sudden fall of vigorous old age—the triumph of time over the physical organization: there was a something gone wholly wrong—it

was a sickness which she could not define—but it terrified her, and the more because of the evident concern and anxiety of the attendant physicians.

This soon was all made plain; the old man, beyond doubt, was losing his mind! But, as reason was swept from its throne—as the intellect was destroyed—as the fire that had so brilliantly illumined his mind went out totally, and forever, to the apprehension of all earthly things—strength to the body returned again. Health, that of the animal, was wholly restored; and now was the bitterness of wo, to which his death had been a small thing, given Phœbe Sweete to drink. The eyes, which fixed upon her, knew her not—the voice that issued from his lips took never form of words, save that one cry of “Phœbe! Phœbe!” which it almost seems the melancholy bird must have learned from him. Alas! the noble old Professor was become a brother to the brute!

It was long before his eldest child could *fully* comprehend this awful truth. She had not heard or known that an affliction so grievous as this was ever visited on the children of men; it seemed a thing impossible that an intellect like his should pass, and the clay tenement live—nay, prosper even, as though a spirit detrimental to its growth had hitherto dwelt there!

As, ere the fatal truth was made known to her, she sat, during the days of his bodily recovery, and read and talked to him, and watched his seeming attention, and then listened to his totally irrelevant words, she could but wonder: as she brought to amuse him many of her own beautiful works, and laid them, one by one, before his eyes, she was frightened at the idiot smile with which he gazed on them—as in her despair she at last, unable longer to control herself, revealed to him the anguish of her heart, and prayed that he would tell her all that troubled him, not till then, when he put her away with brutish anger, that transformed itself suddenly into pitiful cries, did she understand how it all was—and then, but reader, only for a moment *then*, did her spirit faint and fail, as she beheld the awful truth!

There was work for her to do then: work in which Louise could aid, but whose chief weight must fall on the frail, crip-

pled girl ; and that work Phœbe did not fail to accomplish. Much yet remained to the completion of Norman's education ; his best instructor, his father's mind, had literally perished in the task, and now must she complete it, by furnishing him with the means wherewith to seek it elsewhere. Those who knew the Professor, and heard the resolve of his daughter, were speedy in affording her work, which they remunerated well, and a double pleasure attended the artist's work as she toiled now, for a holy purpose, day after day ; while the gay Louise, grown suddenly very patient, thoughtful, and sacrificing, the beautiful Louise, proved that the hero-spirit was not wanting in her.

In his seventeenth year, Norman Sweete was sent to ——— University. A bright, light-hearted, hopeful lad, was he at this time, talented, shrewd, fond of amusements, one of those youths who are capable equally of being everything, or nothing. And Phœbe knew, who knew him best, that he would never stop half-way, either in the upward or downward course : he had ambition, and he had strong passions, they might lead him to the heights, or to the depths ; and knowing this, it was with a troubled heart she sent him forth.

The remembrances he bore with him from his father's house, were surely enough to sober his wild spirits,—to tame his youthful blood. His hopes had been saddened by the stern pictures he had gazed on, and it was with a depressed mind that he went, for the first time, from the paternal roof into the world. But, in three years he would graduate ; then, as a tutor, he could certainly find constant employment—sure support. This Norman pledged himself to do—when, after looking the last time on his father, after parting with Louise, he stood with his hand clasped in hers who was to support him during his absence,—and it seemed to him that look of her pale, dear face, would be a life-long talisman : surely, if ever a proud boy went with good desires and pure intentions forth to life, young Norman Sweete did !

Yet, he had not been gone one year from home, when tidings came to the patiently-toiling, the ever hopeful sister, that for his misdeeds he had been suspended, and had left the University ! Several dreary days passed after this intelligence was received.

in his home, and he did not make his appearance there. Then Phoebe, fearful that the boy, in his trouble, might desperately plunge into wilder excesses, determined to go to Providence and seek him out.

She set out alone on the journey—the first journey of her life! It was a fruitless one. Her brother had left the University, and as was supposed, the city—no tidings were to be obtained respecting his movements. More than this, Phoebe learned that it was not one wild outbreak that had occasioned his punishment. Repeated follies and transgressions had incurred the master's heavy displeasure, and it was only the name he bore which had preserved him from ingnomitious and peremptory expulsion, long before he was suspended.

With feelings almost of joy, that her father could not know of the disgrace his son had brought upon himself—with wonder too, that Norman, knowing so well all the high hopes that were centred in him, *could* so chill those hopes—and with sorrow, that he had not proved able to withstand temptation, with love also, and tender, forgiving affection, it was oppressed with such feelings that Phoebe returned, still alone, to her father's house.

With eager impatience had her coming been looked for by Louise,—Louise, who could not believe the story of her darling's folly—Louise, who would have staked all her hope of happiness on his perfect integrity.

Even during the few days of Phoebe's absence, the extreme anxiety of the girl—the constant confinement to the attendance of her father, for which her whole nature was so unfitted,—had sunk her spirits to a dead level: her health was really suffering from the effect of constant companionship which it had been necessary she should give to her poor, ruined parent. And Phoebe, the pale and feeble one, forgetful of her weariness and heart-sickness, felt that too much had been exacted of her young sister when she looked on her jaded cheek, and saw how depressed in spirits, how miserably nervous she was become.

A physician who attended the Professor had also anxiously watched the change in the gay, bright girl—and he became suddenly, and sadly apprehensive, that real danger attended her self-sacrifice. Perhaps he would not have been *so much* alarmed

by what he saw, had he not loved the fair Louise, but this being the case, Dr. Wild only the more firmly believed that her well-being required an immediate change in the way of living. He longed to take her to his own home where his mother lived—he longed to give a daughter to the dear old lady.

A cough, which so often for the young opens a short way to the grave, had much troubled Louise for many weeks, and though she made no complaint, the fact was not to be concealed that she grew daily weaker and more nervous. Especially, since Norman had so cruelly disappointed her, was this observable; and to relieve her, despite all opposition, Phœbe took upon herself still more of care, she turned even the night into day, that she might work for all—and she was indeed the soul of all. People said she was killing herself by such unheard-of exertion, but Phœbe had no fear of death, and she knew that He who gives to the weak mortal strength, would continue her supply so long as it was needful she should be on earth.

It was a delicate position in which the kind physician found himself placed. He was young and poor—but he devoutly loved Louise Sweete, and he knew that the life she led was slowly and surely destroying her—and he knew somewhat else. A secret which, perchance, a stray breath of air had whispered to him, that he should not have to plead in vain for the young maiden's hand! But how *could* he ask the elder sister to give up *to him* her sole companion,—how *could* he take away the one friend of her heart?

He did ask it; though, to his credit be it said, not till he was convinced that either death or he must win: that speedy removal from her present home to a cheerfuller, though still more humble one, *must* be accomplished, if he would not see her borne to a narrower and more silent habitation.

And so, thus said he to Phœbe:

"What would you do without Louise? You are a glorious woman."

What connection there could be between this interrogation and exclamation, had she had time to think about it just then, Phœbe would have been quite anxious to know. But now, so

matter-of-fact by necessity, was she become, that she only looked on the questioner, and said,

"I could *live*, doubtless. We are strong-hearted: how *much* a mortal can bear!"

This reply made it difficult for the poor doctor to proceed, but he did at last say,

"She is getting very pale and thin, and coughs too much. You should have a man to nurse the Professor; it is no woman's work."

"Ah!" was the mournful reply, "there is many a hard task falling on woman which the kind heart might easily think no woman's work. Poor Louise! she cannot bear, she was not meant for such a task as is set her. I sometimes wish she might be away, much as it would grieve me to part from her."

"But, dear Phœbe, can you not think of a separation which would be a pleasure to you both, which would prove no separation?"

"No, I cannot, Doctor; though I believe I comprehend your words."

"Yes, I must marry her!" he exclaimed, in joyous relief, now that all was out,—*"I must marry her, or it will go very hard if she be confined, a watchful nurse, in this house, much longer."*

There was a long pause in the conversation, and the Phœbe-Bird looked paler than usual, as at last she looked up and said,

"Doctor Weld, does Louise love you?"

"I *know* she does!"

"Then take her, in God's name; for I do believe she will die if she stays here!"

"But, but—you, Phœbe?"

"I shall do very well," was the quiet answer; "she will be near at hand, and you will be a brother now."

"You shall have a man-nurse for the Professor!" exclaimed the lover in a transport of gratitude; "it is essential. I will provide one, that is part of the contract."

"God be with you and bless you," answered Phœbe, fervent-

ly, and with tender solemnity, as the doctor went off in search of Louise.

And the twain were married.

For more than three years, Phœbe dwelt with her father, to all intents alone. Two other persons only made up the household—the nurse and the housekeeper—and, alas! they were now as much to him as his own daughter!

Nothing, in all this time, had been heard of Norman; and though the thought of him was to the sisters, and especially to the eldest, an almost constant trouble, still they could but hope, Phœbe, especially, with every dawning day, that some good tidings would be heard of him ere the night came again.

Every day, also, was this glorious Bird perfecting herself in that art which was giving her a living and a fame; and that record which the angels write on the faces of mortals who are becoming perfect through suffering, was being traced more legibly on hers.

The frequent companionship of the again beautiful and happy Louise, was a joy to her; and there was another who often sought the Professor's house to hold converse with the ever watchful daughter. It was the artist who taught her those first lessons in which, at the very outset, she was recognised by him as no feeble rival. He, too, since those days, had acquired a brilliant reputation, yet was he well aware that more of true and powerful genius was in the woman's soul than in his own. And though she was feeble, and pale, and a cripple, the gifted man loved her. He loved her for her voice, so low and musical, the very out-breaking, as it were, of some of her exquisite, soul-shaped designs; it thrilled his soul as no other woman's could. He loved her because she worshipped the art to which himself was bound, because she had a pure and elevated soul; for her glorious intellect, for her mighty power of self-forgetfulness. She was never else than beautiful to him, but

"She shone in her bright realm, apart
From all of earthly leaven;
A beacon to his erring heart,—
Its ray of light from heaven.

Too perfect there, he deemed, to love
 As mortal things are loved ;
 Too constant in its sphere, to move
 As woman's heart is moved."

In spite of this, he came to talk with her on all other themes than this one of love, which lay nearest his heart ; and, just in consequence, the thought and the dream of her became only more thoroughly a part of his life, and he wished for no future, if he might not share it with her.

In the Professor's study, which Phœbe had made her own now, she sat and worked ; her father usually beside her, sleeping in his chair, or gazing on his daughter's face, repeating to himself her name. And here, every week, came the artist, to look at the lady's work, forever hesitating whether *then* to make known his devotion. Why *should* he hesitate ? Solely because he felt if it ever happened, that he ought not to cherish a thought of her as though she were his own, life would thenceforth be nothing to him. He became humble when he thought of her—he forget, or held very light the honors himself had received, in the conviction that she was worthy, and might have, were she not too proud to claim, infinitely more valuable fame than he ; forgotten was all her want of natural beauty, which, to an artist's eye, *might* seem unpardonable in a lady of his love—he only knew that her spirit was glorious, that she had a heart and soul, and was not ashamed to confess to either, and it was her spirit-love he sought.

And how thought she, the "tried by fire and purified,"—how thought she, who, in her childhood, had prayed but for love—how thought she of him ? oh, reader, as a mortal woman *may* think of a mortal man !

At nightfall, one evening in summer, a child stood at the door of the Professor's cottage, and Phœbe Sweete read (and the child wondered why she should turn so deathly pale,) these words, which were scrawled on a bit of paper :

"Dear Phœbe, I am dying : may I—*may I* come home ?

"NORMAN."

A moment more, and the sister was following that messenger through the street to the place where *he* had stopped. Norman had but just come, and he had said truly, *he was dying!* Had not this been so, he would never have ventured a return home; but in the time when mortal vigor failed him, when he knew almost to an hour when his pilgrimage would end, he hastened back to his old home, impelled by conscience, and his still living love, to pray for the forgiveness of those whom he had never, for a moment, even in wildest moods, forgotten. He would be buried by his buried mother; he would tell Phœbe, his angel-sister, that it was *not* because he failed in love to her, or in ability to feel her goodness, that he first went astray; he would look on Louise once more.

Norman Sweete had, indeed, led a wild, a reckless life; he needed not to tell it to her who now so thankfully, but so sorrowfully, led him to his father's house. He had exhausted his mortal nature, and was yet so young! When he left the university, it was shame that prevented his return to those whose confidence he had so abused; he *had* endeavored more than once, in his mad career, to restore himself; he had endeavored virtuously and soberly to earn his living, but temptation again and again assailed him, until, at last, he was totally lost to worldly good and honor. But it was, notwithstanding this fearful shipwreck that he had made, with heartfelt gratitude that he was welcomed back; with devout thanksgiving that his penitence, though so late, was made known, for the sisters felt then that the prodigal would be forgiven by the Mightiest, even as they forgave him.

The Professor did not look upon his son until after the youth was dead. The morning of the burial Phœbe led him into the funeral chamber, and uncovered, before his eyes, the face of the corpse. The old man gazed upon it wonderingly for a moment, and then, uttering a cry of terror, but without the least recognition of the boy who had once been the hope and the pride of his heart, he ran hastily from the room. Alas, what a night was that which had fallen on a day-dawn so rosy-hued, so full of promise!

When the last sickness fell upon the old man, it was thought—

and, oh, how it was hoped by one sad heart—that the light of reason might, for a moment, at least, be restored, but it was not so. When his head drooped heavily, and more heavily; when he could neither walk, nor stand, nor sit longer, but lay in helplessness in his bed, there was still one cry—and but one cry that found utterance from his lips; from his *lips* only; and the tender, patient answer always given his call was unheeded still—“Phœbe! Phœbe!” They were the last words he breathed—that was the last cry that went up from the dying—and while the piteous wail rung so sadly through her heart, even then she was there, supporting him, nursing him, and he knew it not! How strange that it should be so; that such strong, unwavering devotion should have been given one forever dead to it, while in that very hour a myriad human hearts agonized for human love, and found it not!

There remaineth but one other change, but one other trial through which the Phœbe-bird can pass. She has taken the wife's vow upon her, but the Angels of Heaven will hail their Sister of the Earth ere long. They have already written their welcome on her brow, they have kissed her, and an increased holiness and beauty lies in her dear brown eyes, and in her pleasant smile. Phœbe, the long-suffering, the gifted, the kind, the wholly good, will be a Bird of Paradise, and that before this summer sun looks on the autumn leaves. I know it, we all know it; *He* knows it who has won her but to feel the bitterness of loss. Twelve blessed months have passed since she became the artist's bride, but he knew, before the marriage day, that death would claim her soon. He bound her to him by the sacred tie, that she might be his where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, that in the land where immortals know as they are known, he might claim her by a name wherewith he named her on this earth!

Sweet Phœbe Sweete! She is going down to the Halls of Death, to the region of the Silence; the “eternal weight of glory,” surely, surely, is in store for her; there is no *earthly* good, no blessing of which mortals are aware, that is meet for her who has suffered so bravely, who has done so wisely and so well; and *therefore* it is, it must be, that the Angel of Death is leading her away.

THE CLAIRVOYANT.

"Folded eyes see brighter colors than the open ever do."

E. B. BROWNING.

My vision was not of the night; I was not revelling in the land of dreams. A mortal, a human being, held over my bodily powers a monarch's sway, and thus my spirit was set free from the bondage of sense.

This person, by whose aid I was freed from consciousness of the fetters of flesh, had exerted his power, thinking to guide my thoughts, to direct the workings of my mind, also, by mere exercise of his will. But he had attempted that which was beyond his power of accomplishment, he could not control and enslave, even for an instant, the spirit which fled in that moment far beyond his empire, away from the things of time. He had looked upon me, and I know not how it was, but his strange gaze overpowered my nervous system, inducing a sleep of the animal life, and then this panting, struggling soul escaped his influence, as it had that of the body. It went forth, as the prisoned bird at the opening of its cage, it soared away from the earth which had bound it so long. *From* the earth, I repeat, for its course was not, as had been anticipated, to the 'far and foreign lands.'

I was sick, nigh unto death, with the tumult, strife, and confusion, which had been my portion since my birth-hour. To a place of rest, and peace, and contentment, to a house not made with hands, like a weary child, I bent my course, and for the nonce, time had no more dominion over me.

How pleasant, oh, how beautiful was that *going home!* At the instant of my release, remembrances of pre-existence, of a life which had been mine before ever I became a stranger and a pilgrim in the world, began to crowd upon me. Those moments of exaltation and of intensest yearning which I had known on earth, found now a perfect exposition.

Never had the loves, the hopes, and the aspirations of my mortal life satisfied me. It had seemed to me always that I had given for my earth-home an existence that was deeper, fuller, grander. Forever a mournful conviction of unfitness, incompleteness, and imperfection, had attended my toil. Now, for the first time, could I understand that most sad, sweet saying, which, while it sets the "apocalyptic never" on all the hopes of the mortal, sheds brightness and glory over the aspiration of the immortal: "*Whatsoever thou desirest, shall be granted thee the moment of thy death;*" for now had I anticipated the joyousness of that release, the glory of that freedom, which is the attendant of death. I understood then how it could be, how it must be, that the human, groping in thick darkness on the earth, rarely accomplish the deeds and work for which they are best capacitated; how they labor under constant difficulties, which astonish, and bewilder, and try the only half-sentient soul. I knew at this moment how it could be, that in death the veil removes from their eyes: how they must perceive, then, and clearly, the work which is their birth-right, which the All-Merciful will suffer them to carry forward to illimitable perfection in the eternal ages. For what *is death*, but the mere closing of eyes on the temporal, that they may open again, and look with perfectly-discerning, and clearly-penetrating gaze on the eternal, the immutable?

As I said, when the mortal had so unwittingly set my spirit free, I felt that I was going home. Not to the Heaven, the World of the Resurrection, for that only may be entered by those who are forever done with life; and did not one of the earth guard for me my garments of mortality which must be reassumed? Neither to the homes of the dead went I; but into the wide and glorious soul-land, into the realm of the pre-existent!

Going home! to my mother, my blessed angel-mother, my spirit-mother! she who gave me to that beloved, my foster-parent, that we might for a few years be a joy and a help to one another. I was going into that land which the darkness knows not, which the light of purity enlivens; from whose altars ascend the incense of knowledge, whose foundations and pillars, whose rivers and whose fruits, whose thought, and whose All in All, is God!

How can I tell with *words*, how can I speak as to be understood, of that realm upon which rests the eternal calmness, the everlasting beauty? By what terms common among men, can I dwell on the splendor and the blessedness of soul-land? Can you fix on the blind man's mind an idea of the glory of flowers, of the setting sun, of the face of beauty? Can you, by groans, or prayers, or shrieks, give to the dead assurance of your love? Can the heart of the deaf thrill at the glad tones of your voice, or conceive of music?

Weakly, most faintly, can I utter, and that with tears as I feel my weakness, what *cannot* be fully comprehended. How could one, save in soul-language, rightly tell of the soul-life? or how, with the types and figures of the dull insensate, can be made known the surpassing majesty of *that* intellectual, *that* unfading?

I made my journey thought-rapid, with a consciousness of freedom that was ecstasy itself. I had sought clairvoyance in a vague hope of being for a moment released from the sorrows which haunted me even in my dreams, my last thought on earth had been of struggle, and weariness, vexation, and want. In the hard labor for daily bread I was exhausted. I no longer revelled in the idea of a better day. The exaltation and defiance with which I had pressed on in the path of exertion, was over; the strong will had become paralyzed by incessant reverses and rebuffs.

The awaking from despair by the communication of glad tidings which overwhelm the troubled one with tumultuous joy, may afford an idea, most shadowy, it is true, but still an idea of the exultation with which I went forth to my mother, to my home. If ever you have known such moments of sudden, un-

expected bliss, you will remember how, when the wild joy had calmed into a blissful certainty, you cradled yourself in an intoxicating kind of *rest*, you will have a conception of the steady, and buoyant, and blessed peace, which continued with me as I went my way. But when I entered the world of the pre-existent, I was conscious that a change, a wondrous and awful change, had been wrought in me, since I had years before gone thence to earth. As I moved through the hosts of stainless, undefiled ones, I knew I was no longer of them. In amazement they looked on me, none knew, none recognised; yet I knew them. I dared not offer them tokens of friendship and acquaintance; sin and evil had marked my soul, I was as Cain among them; the brand of guilt was upon me—*I was of the earth!* Oh, with what horror and shame did I confess this to myself! How desperately I strove to hide me from those inquiring glances! with what agony did I go on my way, seeking for my mother! and with what fear was that search continued!

Would she recognise, would she still love, would she hear me?

I saw her coming up from the far distance—the beautiful, the peerless perfection—with her was another, purely bright as a sunbeam. What a fount of holy, yet saddest recollection, opened, as I saw these two together thus! So had I stood beside her; so had I listened to her teachings; so had I looked upon her with a boundless love and veneration.

My mother was speaking to the soul-child beside her in that peculiar, touching manner, which I remembered well had been shown towards me that day when she sent me to the mortal state, and I felt that it must be so—she was about to give another of the untried to battle with the “clutching waves of sin.”

Inexpressibly grievous was the thought of my earth-home thus forced upon me; and in that moment, all I wished was to save my beautiful, innocent soul-sister, from contamination such as I had felt. I wished her to never know the agony of mortality—and it was, therefore, to save her, rather than with the joy of reunion, that I stood forth from the obscurity I had sought—it was, therefore, that for the first time speaking, I eagerly cried, “My mother, my mother, crucify her not!”

She looked upon me—she knew me!—of all who had for-

gotten, she remembered. The dreaded climax, her forgetfulness, and want of power to recognize, was spared—*she loved me!*

Then guided she the tempted, the tempest-tossed, the tried, to our home of the dear olden time; then stood we, mother and child, together as one, then looked we, face to face, then spoke we, one with the other.

“Thou art come back, my child, though the hour appointed has not yet arrived; yet it is well, for now shalt thou be the guardian of this other child, who is going forth to the earth.”

“Oh, forbear! forbear!” I cried, interrupting her. “Send her not, mother; she is not strong to combat, she is not brave to bear. Keep her under the shelter of thine eye, oh, mother!”

“Nay, it is written she shall go forth. Tell her of the earth, of the home that awaits her.”

“It is a desolate desert, where there is no water; a parched and burning desert, without shade trees; a mighty desert, where the birds of prey build their nests, where the simooms rage. Wo to thee, sister, if thy feet falter by the way! the caravan will go on and forsake thee. Wo, if thou makest known the grief of thy heart, they will mock and laugh at thee; if thou comest to want or need, no hand will be lifted to aid thee! There is sin, there is folly there, there is monstrous guilt among the people; there is fraud, and envy, and slander; there is murder and blasphemy, there is destruction and corruption in earth!”

“How hast thou met all this?” exclaimed my mother.

“It has broken my heart.”

“Thou weak one!” and she turned away from me. Then she said to the young soul, my sister, “child, wilt thou dare go into such a world?”

“Mother, yes!” answered the untried one, suddenly and decidedly.

I looked on her with wonder, I said: “Thou dost not, surely thou dost not understand, thou canst not know. Treachery and coldness from those thou hast most trusted, misunderstanding, doubt, these are the very least of the evils which will afflict thee. Child! I feel I cannot explain, nor can you comprehend what slavery, and vice, and calumny, and poverty, and unjust

scorn of thy fellows, and the torturing of conscience, and self-mistrust, mean! Every mortal has to learn. Make her not a mortal, mother!"

"Cease; I had rather thou never camest into my presence, than hear such words as these. What hast thou *done* in the world? The doing much, the doing good, saves one from such thoughts as thou hast."

"I *have* labored and toiled, and borne the burden and the heat of the day, and have only reaped in a harvest of nothingness. My work has been done all for naught; my hopes have proved themselves altogether vanity. Oh, I *have* toiled! Do not add to my cup of bitterness by doubting that!"

"Now, how shall I give into thy hands the care of this dear soul? I would that thou hadst never come here, daughter. Yet—it is as well. She will not now grow up in the world cherishing fancies, and thoughts, and hopes, that must all in turn wither. She will live a fuller and a nobler life, because *prepared* for all that awaits. But you have taken from her the sweet blessing of youth; you have robbed her existence of all romance. Child, dost thou dare go?"

"Oh, yes—yes! What *is* that slavery, and that horrible wrong? that coldness, and treachery, and poverty? I will give myself to laboring, and so it may, in part, perhaps, be done away. I will fight against that sin. Sister, surely, *thou* hast?"

I looked upon her conscience-struck, awed, and half-afraid—and I was forced to answer—"No!"

Reader—may God save you the anguish of being compelled to answer in such manner, when that question shall be asked you!

"Go back, and rejoice that there is yet time," my mother said. "When you come again, then will you be satisfied with your work, my child. I give you a holy work. I make you an apostle. Speak out among your fellows, and with no whispered words, of that which you do know. Smile thou never on sin: if it stands before thee clothed even in the purple, scorn it! Countenance never the works of oppression; believe in the eternity of truth, in the immutability of God's justice. When the times comes for thee to speak, fail not to rebuke vice in its

million hideous forms. Behold, I give thee another work. When this, thy sister, shall appear on earth, thou wilt know her. Lead her in the paths which she should tread ; guide her ; teach her the everlasting truths ; establish her in the eternal hope. And, my children, be ye only faithful over the things given to your care, and ye shall come again, bearing precious sheaves with you."

I have heard a child's voice on this earth which I recognize. There is a soul tabernacled in the flesh which our mother gave to *my* guidance, though others of this world claim her. The time is not yet come for the dispelling of the early joy. Sorrow has not yet pressed the little one to her heart. What do I say ? That time was before she ever came into this world. I read it in the wondering look with which she turns away from every temptation, from the voices of sin, of dissension, of wrath ; in the trembling tones with which she reads of the sway of an almost universal evil ; in the pure love with which she clings to the human, exalting, and ennobling, all with whom she comes in contact. They who look upon her, think to see the day when she will need that comfort which her words afford them now ; but they will look in vain—that time can never come.

I foresee the day when she shall arise and declare what weary and fainting mortals will rejoice to know. I see, in shadow, a form that shall move a very angel through the harvest-field of our Master ; I hear, in echo, a voice, as of a voice heard in a dream, gentle tones and wise utterances, which shall be powerful to rebuke, and convince, and restore, and save. I have prophetic hearing of a song of joy and thanksgiving, that shall float upward from the bondmen of sin whose chains *she* shall loosen—a song that shall be borne through the far-distance to the blessed soul-land to Our Mother—and beyond the soul-land, to Him !

Oh, Mother ! the weak and the weary, the tempted, and the falling, shall learn of, and shall bless thee, for that little child !

THE HUMAN VERB.

(A SCRAP OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY FOUND ON THE BODY OF A WOMAN DROWNED.)

"Friend, he was sheltered by the grave,
And therefore dared to be a liar."—SHELLEY.

"Here stand I, for what end, God knows, not I."
LOWELL'S "COLUMBUS."

"WHEN Judge Holborn's will was read, my dear young brother and I learned, to our amazement, that he had left us utterly destitute. This was so different from all he had led us to expect in his lifetime, that we were more than surprised, we were incredulous. But the proof was left before us; it was convincing, indisputable—we were permitted to read the will with our own eyes—and we learned thus, that not only had the gray-headed old man the heartlessness to leave us, his most faithful servants and friends, (for we *were* more than servants to him,) penniless,—but by words, whose meaning is too dark and foul for record here, which I cannot bring myself to write, he had forever blasted my reputation—had fixed upon my character, with his dying hand, the seal of utter worthlessness! God only knows wherefore this black deed was done—the arch-fiend must have prompted it.

"Harvey and I were young, and strong; we could work for our living: the old man's property was certainly at his own disposal—but he had no *right*, neither heaven nor hell could have given him a title to rob me of my reputation! It was a grievous and terrible wrong he did, in daring to fix on me a stain deep and broad enough to cloud my whole life!

"This was a wo indeed, heavier than I had imagined I could bear; but we know not, till the trial is put upon us, how great things it is possible for us to endure. With peculiar heaviness did this calamity fall upon my brother. He knew that my life, in its few years, had been kept wholly free from those dark stains which our *protector* imputed to me: *he knew*—and in my wretchedness this thought was my consolation—that I was innocent, that I had been robbed, most cruelly *robbed* of my good name, our sole possession.

"Harvey was younger than I. God had greatly blessed him with genius; his soul was finely attuned, and keenly sensitive: the unexpected blow fell upon him even more heavily than upon me, for the consciousness of entire innocence of the evil charged upon me, and a firm confidence in the infinite mercy of God, supported me. Oh, our poverty, in comparison with that wrong, seemed a small thing to us!

"Of course it was impossible that we should remain in Hampshire after the false charge had been brought against me, which it was out of my power to disprove, save by words. We were young, and poor, and destitute. He who had deliberately wrought the great wrong was dead, and his lips were closed irrevocably over that great falsehood.

"From Hampshire, Harvey and I went to Greenbush. We had a few dollars which the poor boy had made, by the sale of a picture of his own painting, and with this, *our all*, we set out in life, scarcely knowing whither to go, or in what way to busy ourselves. We only wished, first of all, to be away from that place, where coldness and cruelty met us at every turn—away from those who *should* have been friends to us helpless orphans. A kind word, an assurance of faith in our virtue and integrity had not cost them much, yet they would not give it,—none gave it, of all those people to whom God had been very gracious; they denied us belief, when we told the living truth, certifying to it with tears!

"Our father had been an artist; he lived and died poor. Harvey alone had inherited his genius—both of us his poverty. In some way, Judge Holborn had become greatly indebted to my father, by services rendered in days long passed away. The

judge was a widower—he had buried all his children, four in number—they died young,—and when my mother was on her death-bed, he came to our house and comforted her and us: he made her last moments happy by the promise that he would shelter and support us, her destitute children, as though we were his own.

“Heaven knows how that promise was fulfilled. Had we not been naturally ambitious, we should never have acquired the least education—we were never sent to school a day after we entered his house, but the little schooling we had previously was to us an incentive—we had inquiring minds, and were bent on learning. It was this ambition which kept us from the evil, into which, as untrained children, we could not otherwise have escaped falling. It was this desire to learn, which preserved me, more than anything else, from becoming the fearless sinner which the old man declared I was. In leisure moments, when we rested from the labors imposed upon us, we attentively read the books which other children loaned us—even for books we were indebted to others, and not to *him*, for the library of the house was always kept close shut, securely locked.

“When we went to Greenbush, Harvey resolved to teach drawing, if he could find a small class of pupils; I, who was not in any manner gifted, determined to set him an example of patience and hope, by laboring with my needle—thus thinking to support myself, and aid him.

“For six months we remained at Greenbush, in extreme poverty. We found little encouragement, and without friends, so young and so poor, it was no easy thing for us to work our way forward. At last we became so destitute that we felt any sort of change would be a relief, for in our case change could not *be* for the worse. Then we removed to a large city not far distant from Greenbush. Harvey supposed that he should be much more likely to find scholars there, and as a seamstress, I would surely be able to obtain work.

“My poor brother was not a great proficient in his art: he needed an instructor for himself, for as yet he was only self-taught; but he had more of hope than any other mortal I ever

knew, and his sole ambition was to succeed, and excel in his profession : it seemed great enough to overleap all obstacles.

"It was our idea, by joint and constant labors, to procure money enough to secure his instruction ; that object attained, it would be no difficult thing for him to find abundance of scholars. Then we would travel from one place to another, and really enjoy life as well as other people. Children we were indeed, to dream of such a consummation !

"No matter how darkly the days passed with us, we never revealed to one another the despondency within our hearts. We were spared to each other, and we knew that with health and energy, none *need* starve in a world that is overflowing with plenty. But there were many times when we *felt*, in our city home, the bitter miseries of poverty. The work we did was for people who always gave us our pay grudgingly. They had surely never heard that God loveth the cheerful giver !

"We took lodgings in an obscure part of the great town, in an old house where many other families lived. Our rooms were in the fourth story ; two small apartments, separated by a narrow hall. There were two other, and larger apartments on this floor, both occupied by a poor family—a man and his wife, and their many children.

"At last, after many unavailing attempts to procure work, through the kindness of Mrs. Hay, whose little girl Harvey was instructing in the first rules of drawing, I was introduced and recommended as a seamstress to a Mr. Woodruff, who kept a large clothing store on —— street. He promised to supply me with work during the remainder of the winter : this happened on the sixth day of January—a date I can never forget. On the afternoon when this arrangement was made, I returned to my room with the lightest of hearts, though the day was disagreeably wet, and the air damp with heavy fog, it seemed bright and cheerful as a June day to me. I carried with me a large package of work, for which I was to be paid as soon as it was finished ; this was one article of the agreement between my employer and myself—the money earned was to be given me at the completion of every job ! Oh, how thankful I was then, when I thought of my brother, and of the easy

life which we should hereafter lead! No dread of weariness, or of the possibility of failure or fatigue, entered into my head. Work to do, and wages! Ah, it seemed to me that day as though I had reached the very heights of bliss!

"I sat in my room while the shadows of night deepened over the city. A bright fire burned upon the hearth; we could afford that now! and keen was my enjoyment of that warm, penetrating blaze—it was the first time that winter that I had kindled anything like a good fire. I sat there in the darkness, deferring to light the candle till Harvey should come. Soon I heard a heavy step, a very slow and heavy step upon the stairway. I knew that it was he—no other person had occasion now for coming up to our story. Harvey's step had often sounded to me very heavy when he came home fatigued and disappointed. (Miss Landon says that

"Nothing like a heavy step
Betrays a heavy heart.")

The lodgers who had occupied this story with us had removed the day before to a house more miserable than this even, I could but suspect, for they were miserably, dreadfully poor,—the wife in very bad health—and the man out of work. Supposing, of course, that the person advancing through the hall and entering Harvey's room was none other than himself, I waited for his appearance,—most impatiently waited, I so longed to tell him of our good fortune.

"It was probably five minutes, it seemed an hour to me, before I heard his step in the hall again; then there was a tap at the door, and Harvey immediately entered. Certainly it must have been he who had just before come slowly up the stairs, but there was nothing dispirited in his manner, as he stood there looking upon me with the gladdest of smiles. He did not speak, but kissed me twice, and then, after he had removed his soaked boots, he sat down at my feet. Looking again upon me with that happy smile, he clasped my hand, and exclaimed,

"'Long live in memory this day! Mary, we have a fortune at last—the sun shines!'

"'Yes, that's the truth,' I said, thinking he had heard through

Mrs. Hay of my good luck. 'Mr. Woodruff will let me have work enough to keep me busy all the rest of the winter. Won't we live now?'

"To Jericho with your sewing! Don't you know I'm an artist? I've sold my picture, and here, behold! are five ten dollar bills! fifty dollars in pay for that! just think of it! what now?"

"What, to be sure? are you quite certain that you're not a little out of your head, Harvey?" I asked in amazement.

"I do so wish now I had shown you the picture before it went," he said in answer, regretfully. 'You didn't know it, to be sure; I kept one thing from you, and now am sorry for it. I've been working on a child-angel's head for several days, morning and evening, in my room. I meant to have sold it to the Art-Union, and then should have taken you to see it some day—but I fear now you'll never see it—for I sold it elsewhere. Long live this day in memory!'

"Amen!" I shouted, excited as himself; and, oh, how long it was before we subsided into quiet, and talked like reasonable beings!

"Harvey had gone out, taking his picture with him: his intention was to visit one of the shops, thinking thus, through one of the agents, to have it introduced to the notice of the Purchasing Committee of the Art-Union. On the way he was stopped by an old man, who asked to examine the painting. When it was uncovered, he looked at it in surprise and delight: he asked my brother what disposition he was going to make of his work, and if he were poor; and then he said he had the exact counterpart of that head among his collection of paintings, and he offered fifty dollars for it. This seemed to Harvey an enormous sum, and he accepted it at once. It was a princely fortune in our eyes!

"Harvey had taken a violent cold that day, having walked with old, thin boots, many miles through mud and thawing snow; and the slight cough with which he was always affected, was painfully increased. But this did not trouble him—he thought not at all of it; and when I spoke of seeking an instant remedy, he would not hear of such a thing—declaring that it

was too late for me to venture out then—and so he dismissed the subject. He was too light of heart to be troubled about *anything* that concerned only himself; and I could not but be happy also, as I looked upon him.

“We did not light any candle that night. The fire-blaze was so cheerful—it made such pleasant light and shadow in the room, that we did not need any other illumination. Strong as young giants in spirit, we talked of the great things we would yet accomplish. My dear, young, handsome brother! how his imagination rioted in those delightful visions which flooded his brain! There seemed to him, and to me also, no possibility of his failing to reach the great height of excellence in his profession at which he aimed.

“It was a moonlit night; the clouds and the mists had given way; and the Queen of Heaven smiled on the earth. Through the large window at the end of the hall which separated our rooms, the light clearly streamed, we needed no candle to light either of us to bed. We would be prudent after all, though we *were* so fortunate.

“From ten o’clock, when I retired, till the clock in the spire of St. Marks’ told six in the morning, I slept not for a moment. I was so glad—so thankful; I knew then how hard a thing it is to bear sudden prosperity with calmness! But one thought, only one, in all those hours, troubled me: the remembrance of that great wrong Judge Holborn ~~had~~ done me in his death. How could it ever be overcome? The bitter thought took in those still hours the form of a passionate prayer—and, oh, how I wrestled with the angel for the blessing of a restored name! Yet, even then, I felt that it was better to suffer as I did, rather than venture, as the old man had, before the Lord of Heaven, with a lie staining his soul.

“In the morning I sunk into a sound sleep. When I awoke again, it must have been near nine o’clock, and there was a sound as of many persons passing along the hall, and in the neighborhood of Harvey’s room. I arose in amazement, and somewhat of alarm, and dressed myself hastily. I could hear men talking all the while with my brother, and heard his voice in answer.

"In a few moments, when my suspense was becoming perfectly agonizing, he came to my door, rapped, and called to me. I went out at once. A glance at Harvey's pale face, and the solemn sternness of the men gathered around him, filled me with awful forebodings. He took my hand without uttering a word—his own were cold as ice—and led me into his chamber. I trembled violently—he looked so excited and distressed. 'Be calm,' he said, with a gently, entreating accent; but I had lost all self-control.

"'Gentlemen,' he said then, turning to the strangers, 'ask this woman all you wish to know.' And Harvey stood back from me, leaving me alone fronting a group of men who looked searchingly upon me.

"One of these persons, a commanding, officer-like individual, stepping forward at these words, fixed his piercing eyes upon me, and demanded,

"'Give me your name—tell me what you are?'

"'I am Mary Wilbur, a seamstress, the sister of this young man, Harvey Wilbur,' I answered, steadily.

"'What is your brother's occupation?'

"'He is an artist.'

"'Where was he yesterday and last evening?'

"'Part of the day—that is, in the morning—he was busy with his sketching in my room. In the afternoon he was out till dark giving lessons to his pupils down town. In the evening, from seven till ten o'clock, he was in my room.'

"'Where were *you* in the afternoon of yesterday?'

"'In the street, seeking for work.'

"'Are you poor?'

"'Yes—no, not now,' I added, thinking of our late good fortune.

"'Ah! a fortune has fallen to you, then?' continued my inquisitor, glancing from me to his companions.

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Through whom?'

"'Through our own efforts. My brother has sold a painting to a gentleman, and I have succeeded in getting work at Mr. Woodruff's store.'

“‘Look here, madam,’ said another of the men, with stern impatience. . As he spoke, he opened the door of a large closet, which was built when the house was erected, in the wall of the room. I did look, oh, my God! upon a murdered man, a corpse! and did not faint, nor scream—but I felt that the sentence of a terrible wo was pronounced upon me in that moment.

“The body was bent together and crowded into a box. It was that of a young, slight man, who had evidently come to his death by violent means. The expression of the face was dreadful; there had been no loving hand near to smooth the features when the murderer’s work was done.

“‘Have you seen this body before, madam?’

“I drew nearer to the body. I bent my head to look more scrutinizingly upon it: the very blood seemed freezing in my veins, as I did so, and thought of where that corpse was found, and heard that momentous question. I was horror-struck; and, for a moment, it was utterly impossible for me to utter a word. I turned to Harvey, and his glance instantly reassured me—he was no murderer! Then I felt wonderfully calm and courageous. I answered at once, ‘No; I have *never* seen that person before, either as a dead or as a living man.’

“My brother, my Harvey, was arrested on suspicion of murder! They carried him away to the prison: they left me alone in my misery—my unutterable despair!

“How those days that followed passed, I know not; they came and went, and were as a long, horrid dream: they left none other than a dream-like trace in my memory.

“At last there came to me a gentleman who had been appointed to defend Harvey. He had visited the dear boy in prison; and *he* had besought him to come to me and assure me of his entire innocence of that foul deed. And Mr. Curtis wished also to examine me as a witness, before I was called upon at the public trial.

“The person who was murdered was a young man, an artisan, who had lived in a house but a few doors from the place where we lodged. Neither Harvey nor I had heard even that he was

missing. It appeared that he was known by many to have recently become heir to a small property—to obtain which, it was not doubted, some person had committed the awful crime of murder.

“The body was immediately recognised by the dead man’s friends; and in Harvey’s room were found tools which had evidently been used for a bloody purpose; and under his bed were found torn and blood-stained clothes. The closet in which the body was discovered, was locked—the key found among my brother’s things; the door had been broken open by the officers in their search. These men had previously searched through all the lower part of the house. Indeed, the fact that some notorious villains lodged there, (of which we were at the time ignorant) had first induced the suspicion that, by some of these persons, the dreadful deed was wrought.

“Mr. Curtis endeavored to assure me that there would not be the least difficulty in proving my brother’s entire innocence of the crime with which he was charged; but I could not conceal from myself the fact of the great imperfectness of my evidence, and mine was the chief that could be favorably adduced! I had never seen the painting that Harvey sold; the person who purchased it, was altogether unknown to either of us; he had not even given my brother his name, but merely purchased the picture in the streets; and there was no clue whereby to discover him. That heavy step upon the stair, which I had supposed to be his! now was I morally certain that another person had entered his room in the night; but, where was the proof?—Only my conviction. Mr. Curtis wished for testimonials to our past integrity—he wished our friends to come forward, and certify to our good character! Our friends!

“To this most kind and christian man, I revealed the sad story of our past life, up to that very night which saw the brightening prospect of our future,—I revealed all to him—and he believed me.

“The day of trial came. Until that time I had not seen Harvey since his arrest. My heart died within me as I looked on him then, he had suffered so terribly. The violent cold

taken on that dark day which was so bright to us; had not been allayed—it had increased—it had told upon him, for he was very pale, and coughed incessantly, and dreadfully.

“The trial was not a lengthened one. It was of course a case of circumstantial evidence. The prosecuting attorney, may God forgive him! did not spare us. With the weight of his eloquence, and learning, and *penetration*, he crushed us—our counsel could do nothing—there was nothing to be done. False witnesses, who testified to the most flagrant falsehoods, were not found wanting: our ruin was complete.

“They who had known us in our childhood, remembering the words and the testimony of the dead—giving to them unhesitating credence, refused to offer any evidence for us, and when compelled to speak, they but repeated the testimony against me that Judge Holborn had left in his will. The ‘eccentricities of genius’ shewn forth in Harvey’s character from his childhood, his ambition, his peculiar talent, his nervous temperament, his imagination, his poverty, were brought against him as presumptive evidence that he *might* stain his hands with blood in a moment of passion, or, for the sake of money! he, who would have starved, who would have borne *all* wrong, sooner than wrong another!

“During the trial, Harvey was terribly excited—the bare thought of being accused of such a crime was almost beyond endurance—the extremity of his position, his entire helplessness, almost maddened him. But that his manner could have been interpreted as that of a guilty person fearing conviction, I cannot believe—that any looking on his youthful face, so truthful, so honest in expression, could have thought him a murderer, I *will not* believe.

“They allowed my testimony, but it was outweighed, was made and *proved* to be, nothing worth; all that I could aver was set down on the testimony of an interested person who was resolved even to swear falsely, if so her brother’s life might be saved. Had not the dead declared that I was unworthy all confidence and respect? was I not worse than a heathen in the eye of the pure and holy?

“There was a moment when all hearts were constrained to

feel; when many wept. It was when Harvey, at the conclusion of the evidence, arose, and declared before God and man, his entire innocence. That sweet, and thrilling voice! 'tis ringing in my ear constantly, and that pale, beautiful face, grown at last entirely calm, how is it ever before me! my brother! my brother!

"Many gave credence to his words, I know they did—but the counsel for the government had not labored with the jury in vain—they brought in a verdict of deliberate murder, and my darling was condemned to death. When Harvey had finished his earnest, simple statement, I could not resist the frantic impulse that seized me. I stood up in presence of the mighty throng, and told with voice that never faltered, the story of our life. The spirit of the lioness guarding her young was in me then; I felt strong to battle with the united foes of the world. I had grown desperate, for I knew, I could but know, how small a chance was left for him; I struggled, as with a giant, for the one comfort, the one hope of my life. They could not silence me by word or look. I felt that in the moment when they were about to take from me *my all*, I had a right to put in my protest—they *should not* work that mighty wrong, till I had spoken. 'Anguish worketh inspiration;' and it seemed to me in that hour as though I were inspired and sustained by a mighty spirit, not of earth. And they let me speak, until exhausted, body and soul, I fell to the floor. I knew that many wept while I spoke. I knew that if the mass of that people could have decided Harvey's fate they would have said—Let him go; if he is guilty even, under the guidance of one who loves him so, he will repent and do well: but my effort was made in vain.

"The day of execution was appointed to be three months from the time of condemnation. The Saturday of every week they suffered me to be with my brother in his cell, and during the other five days I labored—God gave me strength—to maintain myself. I took lodgings in the house of a poor woman who lived near the prison; all I cared for then was to be near him: to *feel* that he was near, to *see* that only a wall of stone interposed between us. *That* day of the weeks which I spent

with Harvey, was given to him solely. I comforted and nursed him, strengthened his heart with words which had no balmy influence for me; I made more steadfast his faith, and his hope in Heaven; it was a blessed work the Father in Heaven suffered me to do.

"And all this time he was dying—slowly, surely dying, and we both knew it, *knew it and were glad*. Excitement and despair had given him a death-blow—he would not need that of the law! There was a physician in the prison, a kind, good man, who did much towards allaying the fever of Harvey's mind, but he could not restore the dear boy to health, to life. And it was with joy that we saw this: we could bear all but that thought of shameful execution for an uncommitted crime.

"His spirit fled away from earth one week before the sentence was to have been passed upon him. I was with him in *that hour alone*. I only, supported him in his last moments, I only received his last words, his last kiss, his last blessing. My wild sorrow was hushed then; I shed not one tear, but talked with him calmly and peacefully, as though we had been at home, and speaking of an earthly future. I made no effort to call in others when I saw that the time of his departure was at hand. While he lay in my arms, still living, I was strong to bear, for he was mine; but when my tears fell at last upon his face, for one moment, and he knew it not, when I felt the hand which had grasped mine so fondly, growing icy-cold—when, driving back those tears to my heart which they flooded, I arose and called the keeper, and pointing to my brother dead, prayed that he might be mine for burial, when I went again from the prison, this plea *refused*, and sought my dwelling-place, how could I but *wonder* at the providence of God? how could I keep one human feeling in my heart?

"Sometimes, in my bitterest sorrow, I have wondered if there were indeed a God of mercy. I have had dark and dreadful thoughts—yet, even at such times I have found my guardian angel. The faith which Harvey kept to the last, has tended to reassure and comfort me. The Almighty *is* merciful, and shall I hesitate to trust in Him? Shall I not rather prove that trust in hastening from this dreary world? I cannot live in this

inhospitable place where human beings have trampled upon, and crushed me; among those who have dared take from me the joy of life, who have heaped insult and intolerable wrong upon me—I cannot, I will not live! Father! forgive me, if I hasten before the time!

“There is a river dark, and swift, and deep. A current that flows on mightily towards the eternal sea.

“There is a *rest* for those who weep—
A *calm* for weary pilgrims found;”

“It *must* be mine. If I fling myself into its embrace, and float on to the land of the redeemed from wo, God! it is that I cannot longer bear the mortal chastisement! *Here* I am an outcast from human pity, mercy, and love. There is no strength in the arm of flesh. My heart has fainted, and failed me. I starve. I die! To thy surging waters, oh stream of life, I hasten; bear me quickly to Him, to our Father, to the eternal shore!”

THREE PICTURES:

SUNRISE—NOONDAY—NIGHT.

"Looking within myself, I note how thin
A plank of station, chance, or prosperous fate,
Doth fence me from the clutching waves of sin;
In my own heart I find the worst man's mate."
LOWELL.

AN artist was slowly passing through the thoroughfare of a great city, where, for a few weeks, he was sojourning.

He was a young man, and the few years of his life, if they had proved heavy and sorrowful in experience, had at least left no dark impress on his forehead. His figure was strikingly elegant, the face manly, and very beautiful; it might well have been taken to represent the Genius of Thought, so calm, elevated, and ennobled by spiritual excellence was it.

The artist was a poor man; you could guess that by the worn garments in which he was attired, for from the figure, bearing, and whole appearance of the youth, it was evident that he was not of that class of geniuses who affect shabbiness in personal appearance, in the name of eccentricity.

And he was an ambitious young man, too. A glance into his studio, where constantly and diligently he toiled in his vocation, had told you that. It would seem by the constant emendations he made, and by the finished style he labored to impart to all he did, that nothing but perfection, or superior excellence in his art, would satisfy him.

He has come out into the open air this morning, not because he is wearied with his work—for it is a continual source of de-

light to him—neither in search of amusement, but to ponder on a thought long harbored in his mind. Three pictures should be his fame. From his quiet studio he would send into the world a moral lesson, that should delight and instruct, and leave in the world an abiding moral influence. Not only did Martin Gray long to win for himself a proud name on the earth, but with the poets and preachers, he would fain lift up his voice and teach—he, also, would be a priest and a reformer, and by his works testify to the infinite beauty of holiness and virtue.

The artist's mind beat joyfully as he revolved this idea in his mind—his hope was high—his hand was skilful.

"If my name only ranks with the masters' some day—if I can do some real and substantial good in my generation, I cannot labor too hard to secure these ends," he said to himself as he passed, unconscious of the noise and confusion about him, along the street.

Mechanically turning the first corner, Martin moved on to quarters of the city where the strife and bustle of the multitude was more subdued.

At once he stood silent, as though changed to marble; then a heart-cheering cry of joyous surprise burst from him, "I have found it! I have found it! here is sunrise at last!"

There were children playing in the street, poor little children, boys and girls, whose only play-ground was that hot and dusty place. In the person of one of the group, the quick eye of the artist detected extraordinary beauty, though it was decked in rags almost as extraordinary. She was a girl of six or seven years of age, faultless in form and feature, the very embodiment of one of Martin Gray's ideals.

It was not solely the exquisite loveliness of the child's face, though the shape and coloring were perfect, but besides the dark rich hair which fell in such profusion on the shoulders of its little mistress, and besides the deep sapphire of the large languid eyes, and the classic regularity of feature, there was an expression, a *soul-look*, which intensified her natural beauty, and stamped her as the owner of an intellect whose range was far higher than that reached by any of her playmates.

"Tell me your name, little angel," said the artist, in the excitement of his delight.

"My name is Alice Flynn," was the prompt answer, accompanied by a smile, and frank look of inquiry, which read very plainly—What is your name, and what do you want of me?

"Have you a mother? where does she live? Go with me to your home, I must speak with her."

The child answered these queries by at once leaving her play-mates—the artist followed her quickly, and, in a few moments, they entered a narrow by-way. Passing a short distance along it, Alice paused before a shabby old frame house, which seemed on the point of bidding an eternal farewell to all things terrestrial.

"This is the place where we live, sir," she said, with the sweetest voice in the world, "will you come in?"

"The little girl is yours, ma'am, I believe," said Martin, as he stood in the presence of what seemed to him an ogress, a gigantic woman, who certainly could lay but little claim to beauty, when compared with the "child-angel" who called her mother.

"Yes—she was'nt lost, was she? or was she up to mischief in the street, just tell me that?"

"No, no, nothing of the kind," answered the artist quickly; "I was struck with her appearance—and now that I have an opportunity, at last, of accomplishing an object I have long contemplated, I trust you will not object."

"Lord, sir, what is it you want—speak it out quick, can't ye—my work is waiting for me, don't ye see? Do ye want the child's front teeth or her hair? I've sold her hair twice to a barber, but her teeth——"

"You mistake," exclaimed Martin, sharply, for he was disgusted with the cruel words and manner of the old beldam, "I am an artist—I would like to take her portrait—will you permit me to do so?"

"No!—what would you do with it?—the girl's about spiled now with folks' telling her how beautiful she is. To be sure, she is well enough (this with a sort of brutish pride) in looks, but beauty don't give us bread, and her looks only spiles her—"

she is getting proud and hateful, since people have told her so much about it, the little fool."

"If that is so, I fear it's not the wisest course to let her play so much in the street," said Martin.

This approach to advice, roused the woman's ire.

"Where's she to be kept, I'd like to know that? A woman like me, as earns her bread by the sweat of her face, has little time to be looking after the young ones. People like me can't keep their children to home like other folks, who have plenty of room in-door and out. So, you see, young man, your advice aint worth much any how."

"Of course, madam, you know your own business best; but seriously, you cannot mean to refuse my earnest request? I assure you it will be the greatest favor if you will suffer me to take the child's likeness. I am willing to pay you for the privilege."

"Then it shall be done," said the woman, brightening up. "How much will you offer?"

"Two dollars," was the answer. "I will pay you more at some future day—but I, also, am poor."

Poor fellow, he spoke the truth, indeed, for the two dollars were just half the contents of his old faded purse, at that moment.

"Well, she may go for that. Here, Alice, you're gwine to have your face painted—let me brush you up a little."

"No—no, I pray, madam, leave her to me. I will take her to my studio as she is; I would not have her appearance changed in the least—the drapery of the child does not need any alteration—I will bring her to you again in an hour."

"Well, she'll be safe enough I s'pose, go on."

"Are you going to paint my face, sir? What for? Will it hurt me?" asked Alice Flynn, as she, with Martin, passed along the streets, hand in hand.

"Not your *face*, child—I'm going to paint a face *like* yours, that is all."

"What for?"

"To hang up in my room, and then, perhaps, to sell it, some day, for a deal of money."

"Sell me! sell my face!" and the little innocent laughed, and wondered why any body should want to buy a face like hers!

Martin, too busy with his own thoughts, made no answer to her many exclamations of astonishment, and wonder. Two steps at a time with the girl in his arms, did the youth ascend the three narrow steep flights of stairs which led to the poor little attic, which he dignified with the "name, style, and title" of studio.

A barren place it seemed to Alice Flynn, for such a nice gentleman to live in; indeed scarcely a whit better than her own poor home.

"Are you poor too?" she asked with childlike confidence, and a most unchildish and unnatural sadness was in her voice as she spoke.

"Yes, I am poor. I paint pictures for a living, Alice. I shall not grow rich in a day;" and the artist's words were not uttered with his usual light-heartedness.

"Now, lie quietly, Alice, for a moment," continued Martin. He had placed her on the ancient lounge, the only reasonable piece of furniture in the room. "Now, close your eyes; ah, not so close, let them be half open as though you were just waking up; now, I will paint a picture the world shall wonder at! Yes, I also will make a sunrise!"

Quietly and motionless as though bereft of life the child lay and watched the artist's movements: in him she forgot herself, consequently had none of that intense consciousness of expression, so often perceivable in the faces of people who become immortalized and perpetuated on—canvas!

(What a sight to see! the lonely, desolate places, where the impoverished children of genius, the painters, sculptors, and poets, have with patient, almost hopeless toil, wrought out their wonder-works!)

An hour passed, and not for one moment had the hand of the artist paused; it is enough to say, that even he was satisfied with the progress made during those swift-winged sixty minutes.

Upon the easy couch Alice had fallen asleep unperceived by the painter; he awakened her with regret, but the time he had

promised to keep her with him was passed, and Martin had little inclination to brave the wrath of the mother. Thoughtfully he led the child to her home, and when he parted with her there, it was with a heart full of sorrow, for he knew that a life of hardship, and want, and temptation, was in store for that girl.

"Poor and handsome," thought he. "God protect her! To be sure, it would be a sad sight were the innumerable host of poor people all hideously ugly; and as to the necessity of the thing, it would seem that such folks require the simple pleasure of being admired, inasmuch as they are debarred from participating in all amusements that cost money, and beauty costs nothing. Yes, Heaven have mercy on the poor family that boasts of a beauty! as surely as the sunlight, pride will creep in under the door-sill, or by the window—certainly in a covert manner. The pretty daughter must be prettily dressed, even at the expense and by the self-denial of the more plainly-gifted remainder of the family. Then come struggles, heart-bitterness, and envy. God be thanked, if hatred and malice do not also come! Now, there's that little Alice Flynn, if she were only my sister, or one over whom I had the shadow of control! Oh, that I were only rich! She ought to be educated! Heavens! what a smile; and what a mind she has; she thinks! God defend her!"

Indulging in such thoughts as these, Martin had passed again through the crowded streets, quite unmindful of all things save the high project he had conceived, which now for the first time, he felt convinced, might really be performed. Once more we find him before his easel, and how he labored there! Six days, morning and evening, he worked on his creation, and Saturday night saw him looking upon it with such intensity of satisfaction, as betokened a very happy heart, for it was finished, and his heart and his mind had declared it "very good!"

The following week there was to be an exhibition of the paintings of native artists in New York, and to the rooms prepared for this purpose Martin conveyed his work; and it was not without a thrill of pride that he placed it among the multitudinous proofs of genius there.

The "Sunrise" was unframed, and having been the last

brought in, it occupied an obscure and unfavorable position. But Martin surveyed it with the eyes of a lover. *He* knew its superior worth, and so fancied that others would behold it in just the same light. But Martin was destined to be disappointed: during the first days of the exhibition, while the rooms were filled to overflowing, but little attention was paid his portrait. Sometimes it was so fortunate as to attract an exclamation of surprise, and a momentary glance of admiration; and, once or twice, a group of young people stopped to honor it with examination—but there were works of well known artists, which must be criticised and applauded—there were “first attempts” of rich and fashionable men, which must be praised—and, besides, it was of course taken for granted that the *best* pictures occupied the most prominent positions, and that those condemned to the back-ground were only passably good, or mediocre.

By degrees, Martin began to take these facts into solemn consideration; and then it was only by great effort that he managed to keep his hopes alive, that some good fortune was yet in store for his darling.

An early hour on the morning of the fifth day, found him once more attracted to the exhibition-rooms—he would endeavor to secure for his child a position more favorable, for some of the paintings had already been removed by their owners.

But two persons were there when he entered—a lady and gentleman in deep mourning—and they were standing before his “Sunrise!” Passing up the long hall slowly, with his eyes directed to the closely-covered wall, where he saw, what only an artist could, the out-written, burning hopes of a multitude of men, he contrived to keep watch of the two who remained so long motionless and speechless before the pictured child.

“Do you know the author of this work, sir, and if it is for sale?” asked the stranger, as Martin drew near.

“I have an acquaintance with the artist,” answered he: “the painting, I think, is not for sale.”

"Why should it be placed here then?" asked the gentleman, quickly, and with great evident disappointment.

"Because, sir, there is something dear to the author of a work besides the money which the sale of it would bring. I feel at liberty to answer you freely as you have asked: the artist hoped that, by this work, attention might be attracted to his skill, for he is a young man necessitated to labor, and as yet altogether unknown in his profession."

"I admire the genius of the man; he will succeed in making himself known to the world, beyond a doubt. But perhaps I might offer for this picture a price that would more than satisfy him."

There was a silence; and in the lady's eyes was such a beseeching look, that it almost vanquished Martin's determination. Looking down, he said,

"The painting is my work: I *cannot* part with it at any price."

"It is yours! and you will not sell it? Mr. Artist, you do not, cannot know, how much you refuse! We had a child—a darling little girl—she was an angel to us—she is lost to us—is dead, young man! And this portrait—it is so like her—I would secure it at any price! Name it—high as you value your beautiful work, consider, to us, it is infinitely *more* valuable! The hours of labor spent upon it have endeared it to you—it is more than even that to us—it is life—for it brings *her* back again!"

The lady trembled as her companion pleaded with the artist so earnestly. It was not in Martin Gray to deny a plea like that. "It shall be yours!" he exclaimed: "permit me to retain the work for a few days—it shall then be returned to you."

A thankful glance of the tearful eyes of the bereaved mother, was what Martin thought at that moment a full reward.

"God bless you, sir! you have made us happy! If five thousand dollars are any compensation, they are yours."

That was another kind of reward! The young man thought both invaluable; and it was with a light heart that he carried the picture once more to his attic studio.

II.

Martin Gray's fortune was made, and ever after he was a firm believer in presentiments—for the Sunrise had in very truth been the making of him. In the midst of his good fortune, he did not forget the poor child, whose beauty had so materially aided his genius. Previous to his departure for the old world, he placed a well-filled purse in the mother's hands, saying, "Your child is an extraordinary girl. This money will be sufficient to secure her a good education—pray do not neglect it, for she will be an honor and a great help to you some day. Promise me that you will keep her out of the street as much as is possible, and that you will send her to school. I am going abroad; when I come home again she will be nearly a woman. Give me your promise that she shall be sent to school."

"Yes, she shall go: as to keeping her out of the street, I s'pose I might as well try to — but, yes, I'll try my hand at it."

"Be kind to her!"

Martin travelled abroad. He studied in Italy, he studied in Germany—he journeyed through nearly all Europe. Among artists, and artist-patronizers, the success of his first exhibited picture was well-known, the Sunrise was everywhere commented upon, and the papers liked to talk of the young artist, Martin Gray, of his skilful hand and generous heart.

But during those years of labor and study, his one idea remained unaccomplished. The second picture, which he had resolved should be a continuation of the Sunrise, was untouched. Imagination was not to be suffered to delay the work in this instance either—but the second picture, even as the first, must be a portrait.

Still, his hands had not been idle. In Paris, his studio (it was not there an attic!) became a point of interest and fashionable attraction; and in Hamburg, the American artist dwelt neither in poverty nor obscurity. The walls of his rooms were adorned with evidences of his capabilities, and, besides the honors heaped upon him, in a pecuniary point of view, his labors had made his fortune.

Years passed on, and Martin was at home again; at home, and surrounded by a multitude of friends, though when seven years before, he sailed from the great city, he might readily have told the voices which bade him God-speed. But fame and fortune wonderfully enhance the interest felt in the once *poor* son of genius—so Martin Gray proved it. His friendship and acquaintance was sought as most desirable; his words were quoted, his dress and style imitated; fair ladies trilled his songs, (for he was something of a poet, too,) and, as a “lion,” the young exquisite was pronounced by fathers, mothers, and daughters, as perfect, charming, and altogether unexceptionable.

“Well, what in the way of amusements, Frank?” asked the artist, as arm-in-arm with a city gallant, he strolled up Broadway, a few days after his arrival in New York.

“What! not heard yet that *Alice* gives a musical entertainment to-night? My good fellow, you argue yourself unknown by such unseemly ignorance,” gaily said his companion, the Hon. Francis Dundas.

“Indeed, I must confess to ignorance. Who is this great singer *Alice*? Some newly-risen star, is she not?”

“Yes, but the few who have heard, say a star that bids fair to prove of the first magnitude—and that even an artist’s eyes can see no defect in her matchless beauty.”

“And which point of the compass does she hail from?”

“Oh, she is a native of our city. Her rare beauty, some time since, attracted the attention of old H——, the millionaire, he does something towards educating her; she turns out a girl of uncommon talents, and has determined to become a public singer. I am told her history is a complete romance, wanting nothing of tragedy or comedy to make it irresistibly interesting.”

“A singer, a genius, and a beauty! we will hear her by all means!” exclaimed Martin, enthusiastically.

And they did hear her.

It was not a “grand entertainment.” *Alice* was the sole performer. She had preferred it should be so, that her powers, whatever they were, might be estimated at their own worth.

Small, and well-chosen was the audience before which she appeared; it was composed of people of refined taste, whose approbation a young debutante might be proud to win. How young she was! and how truly and perfectly beautiful! There was a slight flush on her cheek, else pale as marble, that told how strongly the chords of her heart were struck. She sang—oh! the voice whose tones filled that high hall, was like that we hear in dreams, when angels come to keep watch over us, chanting through the long hours of the night!

During the whole first part of the concert, there was an intense silence, for the audience felt a deeper gratification than could be uttered; but the smiles, and tears, and breathless silence of those gathered before her, were, to the maiden, tributes more acceptable than tumultuous applause had been.

"She is a wonder!" "a miracle!" "what a voice!" "what style!" "only eighteen!" Such, and like exclamations escaped every listener, as "Alice" withdrew at the conclusion of the "first part," from the saloon.

Frank Dundas turned to his companion—

"Well, Gray, what do *you* think? Your wits seem wandering."

"I am lost! it is divine! I have never seen or heard her equal. Tell me, what did you say is her name? The face haunts me; I could swear I have seen it before."

"Tut! swear not at all! It's not likely you have ever seen her before to-night. Perhaps, however, she corresponds with some fairy-queen or lady-love, of your own prolific fancy. Is it not so? I can well conceive such a thing possible, though I'm neither poet nor artist."

Martin bowed, to save himself the necessity of reply, for he was deep in thought; through the obscurity of the distant past, his memory was striving to grope her way.

After a few moments, the singer appeared again.

"Did you say her name is Alice?" asked Martin Gray, as his eyes, for the second time, rested upon her. "Alice—Alice, what else?"

"I have never heard—she is only known by that name. She does not probably need so many cognomens as we less gifted

individuals; and I suppose intends that the world shall know, without being told further, who is meant when the singer *Alice* is spoken of."

"Dundas, I have seen that face before, you may depend upon it. Will you believe it, during all my residence in Europe, I have earnestly sought, but in vain, for just such a face as hers."

"Pray, wherefore? Are you not sworn foe of all lady-loves, save the sweet goddess of painting?"

"Hush! Love has had nothing to do with my search; pretty faces are to be found everywhere; and though an artist, I am free to say, the man who marries a woman for her beauty, is a poor fool. Did you ever see my picture, called *Sunrise*? the one I painted several years ago."

"Remember it? why, my dear fellow, to be sure I do, and what a grand lift it gave you before the 'darling public;' I would be stupid indeed, to forget that picture; a copy of it has been the best ornament of my room for years."

"Well, perhaps you know, though of course you could not, for I never spoke of my intention to another—ever since that picture was finished, I have determined to make it one of a series, by painting two others, one of such innocent loveliness arrived at womanly perfection—and the third was to be the image of crime, or beauty ruined. Never till this night have I seen a face worthy to take the second place in the series. I see one now, and I have an impression that amounts almost to a conviction, this woman is that child!"

"She lives in Tenth-street. If you wish it, we will visit her to-night when the concert is over, or to-morrow. Perhaps, however, you would prefer calling upon her alone?" said Dundas, with a hearty, co-operating look of voice and manner.

"By all means, accompany me; we will go in the morning, and I would be willing to lay my life on it, that singer's name is *Alice Flynn*."

The following morning the lady sat alone in her simply-furnished apartment, in a boarding-house in Tenth-street. The beauty which had dazzled all who beheld her on the previous

night, did not owe anything to dress, or to lamp-light, it bore the inquisitive glance of the sunshine well.

Alice received her guests, the Hon. Francis Dundas, and the Artist Martin Gray, with a grace and ease of manner which delighted them. She spoke with the enthusiasm of youth of the art in which she was so great a proficient, and every word she uttered, revealed a mind well cultivated, refined, and noble.

An hour passed speedily by, but the Honorable gave no sign of an intention to depart. The artist who had surveyed her as he would an exquisite gem, first rising to take his leave, said, "I have a favor to urge, Madam, it is a very great one; I am painting a series of portraits, will you permit me to take yours as a representation of Noonday?"

"I should be a poor representative of the majesty of your theme. Pardon me, I must decline an honor so unmerited."

"Permit *me* to judge that," said Martin, earnestly. "It is an idea I have long desired to carry out. I wished to make the picture an exact likeness, and therefore sought a beauty that was perfect, so there should be no work left for my imagination; now that the object of my long search is found, do not deny me this great privilege. Only accompany some of your friends to my studio; by showing you the Sunrise, I can better explain what it is I wish; or perhaps you will suffer *me* either now, or to-morrow, to escort you thither."

"To-morrow," she answered, "I will come. Ere then, I trust, you may find one elsewhere more worthy to represent your ideal."

"That is utterly impossible. To-morrow then, before the rooms are filled with visitors, I shall look for you," said Martin, with a decidedly grateful accent and look, and the young men walked slowly away.

III.

The Noonday was nearly finished. The city was ringing with the surpassing beauty, and the matchless voice of the young singer, Alice. And Martin Gray's numerous and powerful friends everywhere declared, that the picture on which he worked so diligently, would add the greenest leaf to his glory-crown.

The artist loved his picture—loved he the original? No! he could have worshipped the canvas on which that matchless face was impressed, but when he looked on Alice, and listened to her beautiful words, and the so musical, delicious pronunciation, though he saw and heard with the most enthusiastic admiration, it was still only that of the artist—the *man's heart* was untouched.

He had never shown her the "child-angel." After his first call upon her, so strengthened was become his persuasion that she was *the* Alice of by-gone recollections, that he feared to hazard the display of the portrait to her.

Let us see if his precaution was a wise one.

It was the last sitting. On the following day the lady was to depart, with a distinguished company of singers, on a long professional tour through the Western and Southern cities. She had risen, for the hour was past, and stood looking for the last time on the beautiful works of the artist.

"Do you remember," said Martin, approaching her, "I promised to show you the portrait which I called the *Sunrise*? Pardon me that I have not done so before, this is the one."

He raised his hand, and turned to the light a small picture which for the few past days had looked upon the wall.

A broken exclamation of surprise, rather than the usual tribute of warm praise, escaped the young creature.

"Did *you* paint this?" she asked. "Pray, tell me when, and how," she added, recovering her self-possession immediately.

"I was a youth, poor and needy, having some talent and a great deal of taste for sketching and painting. Unfortunately, as I thought then, I was forced either to resign altogether this employment so delightful to me, or to pursue it in order to supply myself with food and clothes. To me it must not be a pastime. I could not hesitate long—it became my profession. But I had what to another might seem an inconceivable dislike, to painting faces, merely as a workman paints letters on a sign. I imagined that it was just as easy to win the smiles of Fortune, by picturing only the exceedingly beautiful, and giving them emblematic names. Passing one day through the streets of this very city, I came upon a group of children playing—one

of that little band struck me as being nothing short of perfection; I could think of nothing as I gazed on her, but how beautiful a sunrise! how splendid a day will ensue! At my request the child led me to her home; the mother consented that I should take the little one's likeness, and, this is it; I never saw the girl again. Afterwards, as you already know, I travelled in Europe; but though constantly on the look-out, I never found a Noonday, worthy to follow a Sunrise like that child's. I thank you, madam, ~~that~~ in you, and in my own land, I have found what Europe could not show me."

"May I ask," said the lady with face slightly averted from the artist's gaze, "may I ask the name of the girl?" It was the question which of all others he wished her to propose, and he watched her closely as in a careless tone that belied his glance, he said,

"I remember it very well; it was Alice Flynn."

"Thank you. It is indeed a lovely picture. You have amply deserved, sir, all the honors that are, or can be awarded you."

Martin Gray attended her to the carriage that stood in waiting, but Alice, the songstress, did not look upon him till she gave her hand in parting; when he saw her face then, the artist knew he had not been deceived; she was pale as death.

A few months afterwards came from a city far to the south, a letter to our *hero*; its contents were a bank note and these words:—

"The child for whose education you so generously provided, when both she and yourself were poor and unknown, would fain convince you that with increase of years, and fortune, and happiness, she has not forgotten, that she is not ungrateful. All the good that has befallen her in this life, she is glad and proud to trace directly to you—to that one act of well-timed charity. May the God of Heaven forever bless you! The 'Sunrise' and the 'Noonday' of your life you have made unspeakably glorious, may the 'Night' be without a cloud, and complete in its magnificence!"

It required no shrewd *guesser* to determine for Martin Gray, the author of this brief note. The cities of the south were at

that very moment vieing with each other in lauding the Northern Songstress, the queen of beauty and song, the lady "Alice"—and the artist rejoiced in her brilliant success, impatiently waiting till he should see and speak with her again.

There were few homes on earth so beautiful as his; and the wife and children of his age—for Martin in course of time became an old man—were all that his heart could desire. There were no lines betokening care, or fierce strife with the world on his handsome face: he had labored, and that constantly, it is true, but his had not been a wearying toil, rather, intensely satisfying. The visions of beauty with which he mentally surrounded himself, had never been frightened away by harsh experience—to him, even as in his youth, "all things beautiful were what they seemed!"

Many enchanting, perfect works had gone forth from his hands to the care of the world, but there were two original paintings for which he rejected every offer, however extravagant. Copies and engravings of them had been made, but the canvas on which his fingers worked, while his eyes gazed on the loveliest and most perfect specimens of beauty to his mind conceivable, were precious,—were beyond all price to him.

The series had not yet been completed, for Martin Gray had never seen a human being fearfully beautiful and irrevocably fallen, whereby to represent the "Night." And as years passed on, his heart more earnestly and continually hoped he never might.

The great artist is dead! The passing visions of a beautiful fancy have forever flitted away—"he sleeps the last sleep,"—but his works live after him. They live to speak to us of their creator—to tell us of his goodness, of the deep, unfathomed spring of human love, within his heart. He sleeps; but he has left a name that is cherished by his country—and his genius is a source of national pride. How well is he remembered and loved by those who knew him! and the students in his own glorious art, with what enthusiasm and reverence do they cherish his memory!

During his widow's life the studio remained as he had left it;

it was a Mecca, to which, for years, pilgrims the most devout resorted. To many that artist's rooms were sacred places: standing in them, they breathed the air of inspiration, and held sweet communings with the Spirit of the Beautiful!

Of the sublime lessons, and they were many, which spoke forth from those walls, there was one that made the gazer shudder and turn pale. No one, looking on the three faces which were separated from all other paintings wrought by the same hand, could resist the conviction that the artist had meant to convey to the gazer's mind, a deep and an awful moral lesson, for the "Night" was with the "Sunrise" and the "Noonday!"

It was marvellous, it was dreadful, to trace the great resemblance between the likenesses of the angelic little child, the incomparably beautiful maiden, and the splendid but fallen woman!

The same bright, curling hair—the same deep, sapphire eyes—the fresh bloom on the fair cheek—the graceful form—they were unmistakable. But, oh! there was an expression on those features of the eldest woman, that the innocent child and the guileless maiden could not have interpreted: it was a bold, defiant look, which told it was a sorrowful and an ever-to-be-lamented day, that saw her come before the world to wrestle for its honors—a very siren, but, ah! how weak to strive against its sinful allurements—its awful temptations.

They are one and the same, felt every heart that gazed upon them. Reader, *they were!* For the "Night" was also a *portrait*, and the last work of Martin Gray!

Alas, alas! sweet Alice! splendid and courted Alice! wretched, and ruined Alice!

AN EXHAUSTED TOPIC.

THE COQUETTE.

From a far longer time than I can well remember, till within two years past, the Cleveland family were our next door neighbors. Florence, the eldst daughter of the house, was a dear friend of mine, and I would not for the world make her the heroine of this story to-day, were it not for the following fact: two years ago, the whole family migrated to Wisconsin, and now that they are gone so very far out of the world, I think no blame should be attached to me for giving her "experience" to the good public. Sure am I, that buried as she is in the backwoods, she will never hear that I have seized upon her as a subject whereabout to expatiate—without some of our travelling people prove so forgetful of themselves, and what is due to Flory and me, as to touch upon this topic when they meet her in the West.

Everybody said that Florence was a "coquette," and admitting, as a settled thing, the idea that "what everybody says *must* be true," I suppose she was—that is, she was "a gay, airy girl, fond of admiration"—and I will not deny that she may have exerted herself the least bit in the world to obtain it; but most indignantly do I repel the assertion that she was artful or designing, or that she ever regularly "set a trap" to ensnare any human heart.

Florence, when she went from us, was of middle height, very fair, and her cheeks wore the bloom of roses—her hair was of a light, glossy brown, and, oh, those beautiful ringlets! I can

vouch for the truth of it, they never emerged from curl-papers (and, by the way, how refreshing and pleasant, now-a-days, it is to see anything natural, even a paltry curl!) Then her eyes, "deeply, divinely blue," sometimes filled with a sober, tranquil, holy light, and, again, dancing, beaming, and overflowing with joy and happiness.

Though Flory was the admiration of all eyes, and the beaux seemed really to have no appreciation of the presence of we poor insignificants when she was by, yet to not many of us did the "green-eyed monster" ever whisper one bad, ungracious thought of her. We all *loved* her, and a sadder set never waited in our depot the arrival of the Eastern train, than gathered there the day Mr. Cleveland and family were to leave for a home in the "far West."

There were some, indeed, who invariably honored Florence with the title of "coquette;" they had a way of closing their eyes and sighing very sanctimoniously whenever they heard of her new conquests: particularly may this remark apply to old widow Forbes, who rejoiced in the possession of four grown-up daughters, "fixtures" most decidedly they were, in her household—for these four were not in any way remarkable for possessions of any kind, and two of them had well-nigh passed the third stage of woman's unmarried life. But by far the greater part of the villagers rejoiced in the presence of Florence Cleveland, as they would in a sunbeam on a dull day; she was always so cheerful, so generous, and obliging.

None of those sunny curls of hers were visible the day Florence set out on her journey. Perhaps you think that was because ladies do not usually travel with such appendages in view, and that they were snugly packed away in the back of her travelling hat? But had Flory's head been uncovered then, I fear me it would have borne terrible witness to the desecrating hands which had been busy about it; for the fairy-like ringlets which had so long adorned the beautiful head, full beautiful enough without them, were slumbering on the hearts of us, her miserable, weeping cronies; and I know not how many gentlemen's purses were freighted with like treasure.

What a stupid, silent company we were gathered there that

day! It was a bright morning—there was not a cloud to be seen in all the sky, and Susy, the old fortune-teller, said it was a day that augured well for their future prosperity: but that did not help us any. Everybody seemed to think we were about to lose the choicest light of our village, and so, indeed, we were.

At last the odious depot-bell rung—soon after the “fire-demon” heaved in sight, followed by its long train of crowded cars. In ten minutes, the leave-taking was over, our friends were seated, their worldly goods were stowed away, another ring of the bell, that never sounded half so remorselessly before, and away they went, over the road, across the bridge, past the burial-ground, and on—on—on!

To my bosom I pressed a package Florence had given me that morning, which she bade me not open till they were fairly gone. I need not tell you how I hastened home when I had seen the last of her—how, with just one look at their old garden, which ran back of our house, through whose paths we had wandered so often together—how, with one thought of my loneliness, I hied away to my room, that I might be alone with my sorrow. There, also, everything seemed determined to speak of *her*. Close by the window, was the “old arm chair,” her parting gift—a keepsake—many a time had the broad leather-covered seat supported us both, and so, of course, the very sight of it gave me such a blue-fit, that I threw myself into its “open arms,” and indulged in the most luxurious fit of weeping, the length whereof might be counted by hours. But when I had fairly cried it out, (you know all things must have an end,) I went to bed with the most dreadful headache conceivable, and opened, then, with more of regret than curiosity, the last testament of dear Flory.

It was in the shape of a long, long letter, filling many pages of paper; but I shall not indulge the reader with a glance even at all the contents—satisfy yourself with these few extracts, and oblige yours, &c.

“Writing is not my *forte*, you know that very well,” the epistle began, “but I have been, for a long time past, determined to explain myself to you—and when father finally succeeded in convincing us all that the West is *such* a wonderful

country, and that it is the best and only place in which to settle our troop of boys, I made up my mind to write you what I had intended to speak. Don't think me vain, but I'm going to be my own heroine in these pages ; I'm going to give you the key which will make all clear before you, that was aforetime unexplainable.

"When I am gone, and the partial regret some will feel at first, is worn away, and they begin with all earnestness to give me what they think my due, honoring me once more with the flattering titles they have already bestowed on me so freely, then do you, my friend, take up the gauntlet in my defence. If I should happen to die of those horrible fevers, into whose hands we are about to commit ourselves 'aunt Sally' may say it is a just 'dispensation of Providence' that has removed me ; and that forlorn old Juliet Baker might take it into her head to write my veritable history, under the title of 'The Coquette,' and so be published in one of the Magazines, as a warning to all who shall come after me—an immortality to which, I assure you, I do not aspire. Or Tom Harding might be tempted to discourse more eloquently than ever on my respective demerits—drawing some of his most sage conclusions therefrom. So, dear, if such things do happen, remember to stand up valiantly for 'woman's rights' and me !

"As I have mentioned Tom Harding's name, I may as well in these 'confessions' have done with him as speedily as possible.

"I know very well what the gossips said, when it was rumored that I had 'cut him dead,' after encouraging the poor fellow, who was really 'too good for me.' But it happened in this case that they were all wrong—as doth, unfortunately, sometimes happen even with gossipers.

"Tom, since time immemorial (you will bear me out in the truth of this statement,) has been one of the most active of our village beaux ; attaching himself, with all his canine characteristics, to every lady favored with the least beauty, and making himself vastly useful in getting up all sorts of parties of pleasure in summer, and in the winters also. It was very needful, was it not, that we should always be on good terms with him, and this, as a body, you know very well, we managed to do.

As he had been in love with, and offered himself to at least a dozen girls of our acquaintance, I don't know why he should have thought *I* would take up with him at last. Now, was it not presumption, Carry? To be sure he *did* come to our house night after night, and sat often with us in church on Sundays, and it *was* rumored we were engaged, but that, I fancy, did not make the case a clear one!

"The fact is, I never for a moment thought of marrying Tom Harding; but I did suppose him a great deal better youth than he proved to be. When he foolishly proposed *the* subject to me, I dismissed it again, quietly as might be, convincing him that the thing was forever impossible. And I kept his secret well. No one, till to-day, can say that I was ever guilty of speaking of this offer and its refusal, and you know why I now refer to it. Tom himself, by his ungentlemanly conduct, exposed all that ever was exposed, and his impudent, silly behavior towards me, has made me heartily despise him. I sincerely hope no damsel that *I* love, will ever accept offers, which some dozens of women may yet have the honor to hear from him. —

"Harry Kirkland was indeed a fine fellow—at least I thought so once—for I was engaged to him, within a time I well remember. Talented too—was he not? But, oh, what an unreasonable mortal!

"When I engaged myself to Harry I did love him truly, or what I thought was him, but you will not wonder that my love cooled before such evidences of tyranny as he gave, in a petty manner: they afforded me overpowering proof of what I might expect when the chains of Hymen should be flung around us.

"He went to his club, and the lyceum, and became a member of the Odd-Fellows' Society, so soon as there was one organized in the village—indeed, on all points, acted his own pleasure even as to the number of segars he would smoke per day. And I, like a reasonable woman, thinking all this part and parcel of his own business, never *thought* of interfering. But no sooner had I, in a kind of dumb way answered his pathetic appeals, by acknowledging that I loved him, than he at once, without questioning his right and title, proceeded to take the reins of gov-

ernment into his own hands. And then it was incessantly, 'Florence, why do you allow that coxcomb to visit you?'—or, 'why did you go to the party last night when I was away?'—or, 'how can you endure that conceited fool?'—or, 'do, dear, manage your hair in some other style, curls are so common!' Or, at another time, when I had arranged myself with special thoughts of him and his particular taste, the ungracious salutation would be 'It is so strange you will wear flounces; I cannot endure them—and they do not become you.'

"Well, I gave James Thompson, 'the coxcomb,' as Harry called him, leave to understand I was no more 'at home' to him; and I stayed away from all places of amusement to which Harry would not, or could not go, (which former I at last discovered was most frequently the case). And I did treat Charles Wood more coolly than my conscience approved, for nature gave him a good, kind heart, if she did not make him a genius; and I left off flounces, which my tasty little dress-maker thought '*such* a pity;' and I braided my hair, which all the time cried out against the stiff bands put on the curly locks; and, in short, for six months I made a fool of myself, by giving way to all my exacting lover's whims. It makes me shudder when I think of what had been my fate if I had married him—I should have died a very martyr long before this day.

"I knew that on most subjects, Harry's opinion was worth having, his judgment sound—so I resolved to try what might be done on this point, which concerned our happiness so much. By degrees I went back to my old habits, saying never a word to him about the test I was intending to put to him. Perhaps *you* would have proceeded differently—you might have chosen to urge him not to distress himself about affairs far too trifling for his interference—about which no woman likes the dictation, even of a favored lover.

"But, such a course was not the one for me; and, in the end, a person acting on other reasoning than mine, probably would have arrived at the climax I did. Wherever among my old friends I chose to go, I went, without consulting the pleasure of his highness, who had led me about as a child quite long

enough. What books I liked, I read—considering my judgment in such a matter quite as good as his own. I dressed in what fashion I pleased, and wore my hair in the style nature intended. At one determined stroke, I broke the thread-like chains, which, from their very fineness, had been more galling than links of iron. I could read Harry's thoughts by his undisguised astonishment of look; and it was with anxiety, I do confess, that I awaited the result. For all this time I loved him well, though my attachment was not of a nature so selfish as was his love for me.

"One day I sent him a note, with a purse which I had knitted for him, requesting him to accompany me in the evening—there was to be a horse-back party on the lake-shore. Much astonished was I on the return of the messenger—he brought back an answer to my note, *with the rejected gift!* Harry declined the ride, saying he had a severe headache, (well might his head ache, when it contained a brain capable of conceiving such a note!) After some preliminaries, Harry proceeded to tell me that my gifts were altogether unacceptable, so long as my heart continued not right towards him; that I had grieved him beyond all expression, by the heartlessness I had exhibited *in my disregard of all his wishes and opinions*; this strange note ended by begging that I would not join the party that night—he would visit me in the evening, and receive from me then any explanations I might be ready to make.

"In ten minutes more, the messenger was on his way back to Harry Kirkland's office, bearing with him a neat package, which contained that young man's notes, miniature, gifts, &c., with an assurance, which I wrote with a most steady hand, that my evening ride would doubtless prove vastly agreeable; and, that as I had no apologies to offer or explanations to make, he need not be under the inconvenience of seeking me again at home, or elsewhere. I will not speak of the manner in which that afternoon passed away after I had returned Harry's second note unanswered, unopened; nor what thoughts were busy in my mind; nor what feelings filled my heart. But, I will tell you this, at tea-time, when father came home, he did not reject his daughter's kiss, nor the purse either; and now it is snugly resting in the bottom of his pocket, well filled, as I hope it ever may be.

"That moonlight ride—you remember it: perhaps you remember, also, that there was no gayer mortal among you than a certain Florence Cleveland. She may not have slept quite soundly that night, but it was not very long that Harry Kirkland's image disturbed her dreams. He was proud as I—doubtless thought himself the abused one; and I can readily believe, that many times since he has blessed the day that saved him from coquetting me. You know how suddenly Harry moved to New York that fall, and also how you wondered, in your ignorance, that we did not correspond!

"And what of George Stephenson? Ha! ha!! I always laugh when I think of him—do *you*, dear? What did we think of him, till we discovered one day, much to our amazement, that he was engaged to us both? I will leave the echo to answer *what!*

"Never shall I forget that tableau presented—we being our own spectators—when, with head resting on my knee in the old summer house, you, with trembling lips told me of that delightful youth, and of your future prospects; and how when you approached the interesting climax, I chimed in, and told my story too; and how, instead of becoming sworn foes from that hour, two more loving and light-hearted beings seldom took pen in hand, than we, when we wrote that joint letter which saved George from the fate of bigamists! Well, we must agree that there was never a more fascinating youth than he, if only to save ourselves from the obloquy of falling in love with such a rogue. Who'd have thought it? those very stories of his early life and sorrows, which drew such earnest tears from my eyes, I suppose you, too, have wept as he told them. Ah me!—Then, there was the poet Ernest Ward. I tolerated him, because his father was a college friend of my paternal, who wished us always to show the boy kindness, and make him feel that he was not quite without friends in the world. But you cannot believe that I loved *him*. Poor fellow! he is dead now. A long life seemed never to me to be his heritage: the fact is, he did not possess sufficient energy to keep him alive. And he was eternally railing against fate and his poverty, themes which

no man must dwell on, who wishes to gain favor in my eyes. His talents were not of that order which commands the ear of the public, and yet he seemed to think so, and in that thought centred his hope. There was nothing practical about Ernest. He belonged to that miserable class of dreamers (how many of them we see around us!) who are aptly described as having lost their way in the great roads of life—as having groped blindly past the stations they were designed to fill. Ernest had a good deal of fancy and ingenuity, more than should have been lavished on newspaper enigmas, and verses descriptive of the color of my hair, and eyes; he might have made a capital designer and manufacturer of toys. He was made, I am convinced, for some such purpose, and might have excelled in some such art; but least of all you will acknowledge was Ernest Ward fitted to be my husband—and well for us was it, that if he did not know it, *I did*.

“Last of all of whom I will speak is Edward Graham; and thus I fancy I hear him lamented by some whom I *will* say, I am not sorry to have left behind me—‘a fine fellow, but driven to desperation and to sea, by that worthless flirt, Florence Cleveland.’ Now will I give you an opportunity, *ma chere*, to laugh in your sleeve, if you will, for beyond the shadow of a doubt, I am engaged to this same Edward, and what is more, I mean to marry him.

“How shall I explain conduct that will appear strange as this to you? You know Ned almost as well as I do; as we have both known him from our childhood, it would be idle in me to speak of his fine, noble, generous character, and of his sensibleness—which is a far rarer component of the human character than many people seem to imagine. Our engagement was, I confess, an altogether unanticipated thing to me, though there was always a lingering thought in my mind that Ned approached a little nearer my standard of manly perfection, than any suitor I ever had. You and I have often admired the outward man, so I will not now speak of those great black eyes of his, which seem to pierce you through and through—as though they would know all your secret thoughts—which as far as regarded him could be only thoughts of admiration and

respect. Neither will I now *refer* to that glorious voice, and the manly form that was never yet bent with the weight of a mean or sordid thought—that could not stoop to anything low or ignoble. Now, when I tell you, that Ned hired himself to a sea captain, whom his father has known from boyhood, for three years,—that his wages, excepting a trifle, have been paid at Ned's request, into his father's hands, to aid the old man in his embarrassment, you will certainly concur with me in thinking, that my Edward Graham is the most noble and generous youth in the whole world!

"Only a week before his departure we made our arrangements; for before that time, Ned had never spoken to me of love. I never heard of his broaching the subject to any one else, did you? In three years he is coming back again—by that time we shall have become settled, and have learned to love our new home. What farmers we shall be! Then Ned will join us in Wisconsin; and who says we shall not be a happy family there? and that Flory will not prove quite tractable and human, although people have dared and presumed to call her a 'desperate flirt'?"

"So my dearest, I have given you a true history of my coquetting (?) life, with the exception of the tragedies you are acquainted with already. Frank Blake died it is true, but never for a moment have I reproached myself with his death. He was 'found drowned,' so the verdict of the coroner's jury ran; but have none others been found drowned than men who were in love? I am not jesting, or speaking lightly now. Heaven knows the subject is too fearful to jest about! Could they who have seemed to delight in calling me little better than a murderess, but know what bitter, bitter hours I have spent writhing under their scorpion tongues, they would, I think, be satisfied. I tell you again, my friend, Frank never treated me more kindly, or considerately, or *justly*, than he did that day when I told him I could not love him as he deserved to be loved—though I must ever bear towards him the utmost respect, the kindest feelings. And when Tom Harding made that incident a theme for newspaper gossip, I wonder Heaven did not blast the right hand that dared write such things.

"You know afterwards, I went to Frank's home—to his widowed mother. She, too, turned in horror from me, when I told her who I was, and why I had come so far from my home in search of her. Go to her now, my friend, and she will tell you that she attaches to me no blame. Even the agonized, heart-broken mother believed me, when I told her all that had transpired between her son and me. She knows, as you know, and as I know, that I never won the affections of her son intentionally, for the mean purpose of adding one more name to my list of conquests.

"And of that other whose name I will not write—he who died in the convict's cell—*had I* ought to do with that man's crimes? The brutish madness with which he heard my refusal of his suit—his dreadful downward course afterwards; oh, can unreturned love be the instigator of such crimes? Had he not been a reckless youth ever: disliked of all the village boys, whose friendship, even his wealth and good family could not buy for him? If I would not wed a villain such as he, where rests the blame? Oh surely, not with me. I did not make that festering, sinful heart of his, nor did I lure him on to hope that I would ever be his wife. If love is heaven, what were life with such a man? I cannot write more. 'I am not what I have been.' Yet the sun shines brightly still, as in my childhood, and the future is full of hope. If I have disproved that charge of folly and heartlessness laid against me, it is well; nevertheless, I cannot think my proceedings have been so very criminal, or sinful—they had no power to frighten honest-hearted, noble, Ned Graham!

"Hereafter, when you see a woman whose conduct is (as mine has been till now) to you quite unexplainable, and full of mystery, listen, dear friend, and bid those around you listen, a little more earnestly to the voice of human love, and christian charity; and trust *me*, the number of those who have the power to act long in direct opposition to the better impulses of woman's nature, is surprisingly small.

"If your trust continues in me still unshaken, as in the days gone by, (I know it does—that you have not seriously doubted me ever,) come ere long to Wisconsin, and I will insure you a

husband of the 'free soil,' who shall bear as little resemblance to our faithless George, as my Edward does, and a home in the wilderness, the glorious wilderness!

"God bless you, love—good bye. ——"

I have not yet obeyed the call of my friend to the far west, now her happy home. Do you think it advisable for me to place myself in the hands of such a —, but first let me ask you, do you think Florence Cleveland was a coquette? And if so, is a coquette a heathen?

And, is this once prolific topic *yet* exhausted?

THE SERPENT AND THE DOVE.

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse."

Two infants, bearing no sort of resemblance, save in sex and helplessness, were on the same day born.

Surrounding one, was all the pomp and state that distinguishes the mansion of a lord in the land, and amid scenes of almost regal magnificence, the eyes of the infant opened. Far to the opposite as you can well conceive, was the home and surroundings of the other new comer on earth.

Joy-bells were rung, there was a smile of satisfaction on the lip of the sire, and gladness in the heart of the mother, when their first-born, the heir of princely wealth, awoke to life. But there was, in that same hour, a sorrowful increase of anxiety and care laid on the mind of the poverty-stricken father, and a despondency and sickness of heart in the mother of the other child.

Besides the satisfaction with which the birthday of the one was welcomed by many friends and a great household, and the attentions of the poor kind friend who, on that day, strove to make that other family comfortable, there were other and far different attendants of these twain.

While the heir of the greatest estate of the kingdom, lay helpless in the arms of his nurse, unseen by all eyes save his own, which were half shut and apparently without any power of vision, there came fluttering through a path of sunlight a white-winged dove. It floated around the little child, circling ever nearer and nearer, and striving, as though it were a human thing, to win

the attention of the child. But it was only for a moment that the babe glanced upward and looked upon the gentle bird. Even the white glitter of those wings which were like silver in the sunshine, could not successfully attract his eyes: for, also brightened by that sunlight, coiling, and moving rapidly on, his black eyes glistening and emitting that baleful light which has an almost almighty power to charm the souls of men, came the serpent to that place which was so hallowed by the presence of a young, new life. The bright thing dared to lay itself at that child's feet, to fix those hateful eyes full on the innocent! And lo! the infant's tiny arms outstretched as though he would clasp the reptile to his breast! and a gay smile overspread the face of the boy.

So from the walls of that proud castle, the unregarded dove sped away, and the sun, which had been all that day shining so brightly, went suddenly behind a cloud. Ere night came, there was a furious storm breaking over and around the mansion of that lord; the rains descended, and the winds blew violently upon it, so that the day which had opened bright with promise and rejoicing, closed in darkness and gloom. And while the mother pressed her infant more closely to her breast, as though she might so shield it from all harm, an unaccountable fear came upon her—and, with dark presentiments of evil, the powerful lord paced his fine halls alone. The frenzied joy which filled his heart when they told him that an heir to his house was born, had quite died away, and it was with a shudder almost of regret, that he thought upon the child.

So passed the first day of the new Lord of Rossford on this earth.

That other, who, in the same hour with Walter Cunningham, first saw the light, was the child of a poor day-laborer. The birth of an heir to the poverty of that house, was no extraordinary event—there were no bells rung to tell the gladness of the parents' hearts—there was no feasting and making merry, because unto *them* a child was born!

Already many young beings had come into that home to be fed, and clothed, and cared for. Of course, beyond the procuring of apparel and food for their offspring, the hopes of the

parents might not soar; their bodily wants were all that they *could* satisfy; indeed all the capabilities of the hard-working man and woman were completely exhausted in their toil for such things as perish.

The father had gone to his labor, which, no matter what the event, so long as sickness was not on him, must not be suspended for a day, or something very like starvation, would speedily ensue; the ill-clad, ill-fed children were out at play; the mother slept.

The faded old curtain which shaded the window of the hovel, was slightly put back, and a stray sunbeam peeped in, thinking, no doubt, it was a worthy act of charity to enliven so poor a place. Its pure rays were not shocked by such a scene of filth and degradation as too frequently meets the gaze that dares fix on the homes of the poorest poor. Hard workers though they were, with scarcely a thought of ever bettering their circumstances in life in any degree, the good mother of that household would have thought it a sin and a shame to increase the discomfort of her children and husband, by making the worst of a fortune, bad enough in itself.

No coroneted cradle, no robes of lace, were prepared for this little child; no costly gifts were sent him; no congratulations were lavished on the parents; no proud and flattering predictions were made as to the future of the babe. Ah, no! wrapped up in coarse, rude "swaddling clothes," the infant awaited those two visitants which every day and hour attend the newly-born.

The blue eyes of the boy were upraised. Though their power of vision was not the most acute, they saw, perhaps, something to admire even in the dark and smoke-stained ceiling, which was so low as to seem almost even within his reach. A wise observer of things might have regarded this act of the child as a sure indication of the strong *excelsior* spirit within him. But, perhaps again, and most likely, the act was simply a providential one, for just then, overhead, the white dove paused, and fanned him by the gentle motion of her wings, and the infant smiled when he saw it, and a faint, weak cry of joy escaped him. The woman who was watching him, moved him gently

in her arms, and the action forced his eyes to fall upon the black, many-hued serpent which lay coiled at his feet. Strange was the cry that burst then from his lips, but it was a cry of terror rather than of joy.

Slowly was the dove flitting away, when the child's eyes raised again and fixed upon it: looking back with intense regret and sorrow, the silver-winged saw the appealing look of the infant, which seemed beseeching him to stay and abide there—and, quick as thought, the look was answered, the dove was hovering, a guardian angel, over the child again!

And still the mother slept, but, in a measure, the destiny of that child was fixed!

The sunshine disappeared gradually from the little room; ere long, the children came home again, "tired of play;" the clouds gathered thick and black, the thunder muttered in the distance, and frequent flashing of lightning, told of the wild "storm brewing." Soon the father came from his labor. The heavy look of care with which he had gone forth in the morning, was entirely gone from his honest face—a smile was on his lip, and a cheerful light in his deep-set, gray eyes. He brought with him the supper of the family, and the friendly neighbor at once busied herself in its preparation. And while she did so, the man took the baby in his arms softly, and tenderly, and real fatherly affection looked from his eyes, as he scanned the helpless little thing.

When the supper was prepared and the youthful legion gathered, with no very graceful movements, nor with remarkably soft voices about the table, the father gave the infant over to the mother, and as he did so, he spoke kind and tender words to her, and somehow her heart had meantime grown also marvellously light and glad; she could smile as she laid the helpless new-life in her sheltering arms.

And the rains descended, and the winds came, and the storm beat upon that house, but it fell not—peace, and contentment, and a sense of security were within, for an angel had been there, and blessed those parents through their little child.

II.

A beautiful, graceful boy was playing in a park magnificent in its proportions, and princely in its stateliness. He was clad in a suit of black velvet, with wristlets and belt of gold cloth. His hands were small, and delicately fashioned as a girl's, and on one finger sparkled a diamond ring.

The boy was very beautiful, but his countenance lacked the openness and nobleness of expression, so pleasant to observe in children. There was a suspicious, penetrating look in the small black eyes, and there was something about the thin lips certainly not calculated to inspire much confidence in the uprightness and truthfulness of his nature. Yet his was a striking countenance: the forehead was high and broad, though retreating—his bearing was noble, that of one who *knew* he occupied a high station in the world—his voice was sweet, and winning in its natural tone, and there was a grace and loftiness in his manner developed extraordinarily in one so young.

He was alone, and it was yet quite early in the day. The plumed hat was thrown carelessly on the grass, and the usually pale face of the boy was flushed with excitement, and a smile of triumph was on his scornfully-curved lip. After looking eagerly for a moment on the smooth gravelled walk, he stamped heavily upon the ground, exclaiming, gladly,

"That makes thirty!"

"Thirty what?" asked another boy, who came up, just then, from a remote corner of the park.

The new comer was of the same age with Walter Cunningham, but with his age all points of comparison ended. Very, *very* great was the difference in their personal appearance, whether regarded naturally, or as fortune had dealt with them. He was shorter, and much more clumsily built; his hands and feet were large, and far from gracefully formed, his thick, black hair, looked bushy and wild, and the large, marked features, bespoke him the descendant of a race of laborers.

In fact, these two young boys stood the representatives of two distinct and widely separated classes of people.

The one proud and haughty; slenderly and gracefully formed,

with voice soft as a maiden's, was a type of the nobility of the day—the gilded frame. The other, strong of limb, with rugged voice, and rugged form, dependent on his hands for the bread that kept life in him, noble in soul, large in hope, untiring in endeavor, ambitious and powerful, though a mere boy, was a fitting representative of the great and mighty class, The People; the *picture* without which that shining frame had been indeed but a worthless, showy thing. For the people *may* live without an aristocracy—the aristocracy independent of, and without the people—never!

"Just thirty ant-hills," was the answer returned to the question of Peter Whitney. "The dirty creatures! I mean to kill them all, and destroy their nests; they shall learn better manners than to come here and set up in Rossford Park!"

"Well, that's a queer speech," replied the other boy, bluntly. "Why, master Walter, they haven't hurt you, have they?"

"Hurt me? no! I'd like to see 'em at it! but I found one on my hat yesterday, and they have no business there, or here. I'll kill them all—I won't leave *one*!"

"But how silly that is! Don't you know the poor weak things can't hurt you, nor anything in the park? Why not let them be? They have worked so hard to make their nests in this pleasant place, they deserve to live here. I always feel a great deal more contented, and better too, when I see such little creatures working away every day so patiently."

"Look here—don't you try to teach *me*, Peter Whitney. You know who I am, I suppose—and who *you* are, too."

"Yes, I know. You are a very proud, rich boy, and an only child: you'll be heir to all this fine land some day. *I* am a poor workman's son, and plenty more like me are at home. *You* ride in a coach, I walk on foot, and barefoot too. You wear velvet, I wear fustian. Do you think *that's* a reason why I shouldn't tell you that it's a sin, and very cruel in you, to kill these ants, and put your foot on their nests?"

"Just stop where you are, or it may be worse for you, sir. You've said enough; and don't you ever try to teach me again, you low-bred, impudent"——

"I see—you're angry now, master Walter; but when you're

alone and think, *for you can't help thinking*, then you'll see that you are in the wrong."

"Go away! go off this minute, Peter Whitney, and don't you ever come here again in all your life; don't you ever speak to me again, or *dare* to come near the castle!"

But Peter was gone, and out of hearing, before half the young lordling's mandate had escaped his lips.

And again the serpent glided to the feet of the heir of Rossford, and casting those glittering eyes upon him, he smiled a serpent's smile in the young boy's face; and the boy laid his caressing hand upon it, and the demon in disguise whispered, "Thou hast done well, rich, beautiful boy; teach all such upstarts their proper place when they come near thee; and by keeping the world at its distance, thou shalt teach the common herd of men that thou art not such as they."

As Peter Whitney went on rapidly to the workshop where he was learning a trade, and by his diligence and skill winning the praise and respect of his master, the white-winged dove went with him, and her shadow fell like a ray of light on the path before him; and the boy was very happy.

III.

Walter Cunningham was a man of the world—a "lion" in London. A successful author—a wit—a gentleman of great wealth and refinement, (by marrying these words I would have none think *I* hold them inseparable,) and of course ambitious, or he would not have been a writer at all, being so far removed from all necessity. But this enumeration is far from a complete catalogue of the young man's personalities. The world saw him in a most favorable light, at least that part of it with which he cared to pass well.

But there was a woman whose peace of mind he had ruined forever—whose name he had made a by-word in her native village—whose prospects in life, humble as they were, he had blighted—whose hopes he had destroyed. She was a girl trusting and blameless, cursed with beauty when he first knew her; but, in after years, when he was in the height of his pride and

glory, *she*, among strangers who did not know her shame, was enduring a wretched, a burdensome life. While he reigned in the scenes of fashion and revelry, and the shadow of a thought of her came seldom nigh him, she drank even to the lees that cup whose waters he had made so fearfully bitter. Nothing remained for *her* but to die, or to live a life which was one continued death-pang; but, for him there was the honor of men, the love of fair and good women, and the world's admiration!

There was a boy, the son of poor parents, who had denied themselves, as only poor and loving people *can*, of every luxury, and many a necessary comfort, that they might give the child an education, by which he might one day make a respectable figure in the world; for their hopes and the prophecies of friends, induced the belief that he both could and would. The youth struggled well—he was nerved by the desire to fulfil his parents' hopes, and to prove himself worthy of them: he was successful in his endeavor, but his health gave way in the constant and unwearied efforts he made. Still, night and day he devoted himself to the intensest study, for there was a prize to be won, and if he could only take to his father and mother *that* testimony of his standing in the graduating class, what a joy it would be! It was *not* for himself, to satisfy his own pride, that he struggled to surpass his fellow-students—it was for those who were dearer to him than self—for his old father and mother, to whom he would give, while they were yet spared to him, an earnest of what he would yet do!

There was but one rival in any degree to be feared by him. That rival had wealth and a title, and for friends, he might have named the nobles of the land—this consideration, probably, had no influence in the minds of the professors! The rival was Walter Cunningham; and could *he* suffer a poor, unknown plebeian to triumph over him?

For a few days before the final decision was passed on the students' progress and ability, the proud and ambitious youth gave deep attention and great diligence to study. He had a more active, quicker mind, than the poor man's son: he mastered difficulties more easily and gracefully—the path of learn-

ing was not to him a rough and hilly way. Of far keener and subtler intellect than the other boy, and possessed of much of that natural cunning which Bacon says a man must possess if he would impress others with an idea of his knowledge when he has it not, there was little doubt in the minds of those who watched the struggle, that Walter would win the prize, and he *did* win it.

There was an essentially mean pride, a disgusting selfishness in the young noble, or he would have seen, and would have been taught by the knowledge that his rival *needed* the honors, all of which he grasped—needed them as an encouragement in that life of labor to which necessity had dedicated him—needed them to keep up his often flagging hopes—needed them to assure those who of their need had given him the means to buy learning, as a promise of his ability and ultimate success.

The poor youth went from the college, suffering under a disappointment the keenest—he went broken down in constitution to be nursed for a few months by his more miserable parents, and then to be laid by them in the earth.

I do not mean to assert that in another event this had not been so. That, had he won the prize, his life would have received an impetus which would have overcome the disease within him—that he would henceforth have gone on conquering and to conquer—surmounting all difficulties—overcoming all obstructions; but I believe it would have been the case—the success of a first great endeavor is with many such an all-important thing! And I say, too, that many a time in pursuing that one, and to him trifling object, (comparatively) the White Dove flitted over the head of Walter Cunningham, bidding him to not strive for victory *then*—but the Serpent was all the while nestling at the feet of the young man, and his hand rested lovingly upon it!

But I would not have the reader suppose that the nobly born, the heir of Rossford, *never* heeded the presence of the Dove—that the voice of the Serpent was the only voice to which he ever listened. Many a time did he grieve over his weakness, when he had given way to the plausible reasonings of the spirit which came to him in the shape of bewildering evil. Often he

rebuked her for her teachings, and scorned her words. But this was not frequently the case ; his tears were not tokens of amendment. It was only at times when the Serpent spoke too loudly and too coarsely for his delicate ear, that he scorned her counsel ! He did not love the presence of the emblem of purity, and meekness, and love, which so often came before him on pure white wings. And this was not all, nor the worst. Of that crafty spirit he learned craftiness—learned to speak with stammering lips and a false tongue—learned to *hide* beneath soft smiles and guise of frankness, a treacherous heart, and base desires. Alas for such an one ! alas for those with whom he has to deal ! For himself it were better that a millstone were hung about his neck, and be drowned in the depths of the sea, than that he should live a falsehood among men—a curse in disguise ! to shame the mortal form he wears !

But he was rich and powerful. In the House of the Peers of England his voice was often heard, and his words had weight. The young and the old applauded him and sought his favor ; and yet, was there ever in those speeches, which by their eloquence enchained every listener, and might, had he so willed it, have worked incalculable good, was there ever a burning word let fall in behalf of the oppressed, the down-trodden, the starving poor ? Was ever an indignant rebuke of wrong known to issue from his lips—a token of a virtuous and generous heart given ? Never ! never ! No human heart, or mind, or desire, or life, was ever a whit the *better* because of him ! He might charm by his glitter and show, (it was the glitter and show of the serpent !) but never were his words winged over the land by the dove of peace and purity, telling hope to the famishing—assuring the wronged and abused that there was one pleading for them in the high places of the land !

He married. Interest, and a gratification of pride, were the basis of the union on his part. Ah, the curse that almost invariably follows a connection such as that ! The miserable, gradual awakening of the wife, who at first *did love* the man she had wedded—the coldness and disesteem which time strengthened and increased, the views less lofty and noble she

began to entertain for virtue, the readiness and pleasure with which ere long *she* listened to the beguiler—the tempter!

The wife of Walter Cunningham was not possessed of a strong and lofty mind: a lover of pleasure more than a lover of goodness, if that was only to be found and attained by travelling in the hard path of self-denial—she was not long in learning to seek out for herself a mode of life which was seldom troubled with thoughts of her husband. United by marriage vows, but wide asunder in thought and inclination, as can be well conceived—each determining at last to seek his and her own happiness in the way they saw fit, that was their wedded life. Fame does not spare such people—though, perhaps, the notoriety they acquire is not that they would prefer!

She, the wronged, abused woman, as she believed herself, sought in coquetry and extravagant display, a solace for the mortified affections of her heart. He, among other women, whiled away the hours which should have been kept sacred to his home duties. Heaven have mercy on the children of such an household! Riches, and titles, and honors, can have really very little to do with making their comfort and happiness, or towards instilling in their minds principles of goodness, honesty, and virtue. Oh, if a voice from the silence may only speak to them, and pray them to heed the flittings of the dove! if they will only learn *in time* the vileness of the serpent, and her beguilings!

IV.

The deciding point of Peter Whitney's life was *not* in his birth-hour when his eyes directed upwards, and fixed upon the Dove, any more than it was the deciding hour of Walter Cunningham's life. A thousand times the choice was proffered to him, a thousand occasions presented themselves when he must choose whom he would serve: the temptations which filled his path were certainly as great as those which bewildered and beguiled the lordling—only they were of another order, and appeared in a really less suspicious, and therefore more to be dreaded form.

Assuredly he had been tempted oftentimes, but a voice had ever whispered to him, and he had heeded it; "You have a

mission in this world—a mission such as is given to every man, and every woman—you *must do good*. You must help the oppressed : you must see to it that the hand of the powerful is not suffered to lie on the helpless so heavily as to crush human nature, and to bend it to a too weak submission. Where there is want, as much as is in your power, *relieve*—where there is envy, seek to arouse the envious to noble exertion—where there is wrong, help to make right again ; where there is suffering and sorrow, if you can do no more at least, give sympathy and prayers. You are not sent a mute into this world. You have a voice, use it on the side of justice, of goodness, of God. Labor, it is man's noblest privilege. Guard your heart, 'redeem the time,' let your soul be not lost ; for if you win the brightest of crowns in the race and the battle of existence, what *will* it profit you in the end if the heavenly birthright is lost?"

A heart that had an inclination to always listen to such a voice, could not be very far removed from safety.

Industry, honesty, loftiness of aim and desire, together with firmness, and perseverance, accomplish great things for a man ; no matter how humble his birthplace, the end he reaches will be necessarily grand. Almost always we see the strong mind and powerful workers, in all departments of labor, intellectual and physical, springing from the people. The ambition of such men, as it is the highest, is often the noblest, too—the objects they seek are great objects. It is a pleasant sight, a man raising himself by dint of moral strength from obscurity to the proudest eminence of glory : if he may not be a God and create, he may attain to a place "little lower than the angels"—*may*, but to reach this end, some effort is required on man's part, effort to expand his intellect, effort to correct and purify his heart, or one can but think that he will prove in the end, not a "little," but a *great deal* lower than the angels !

The disciple of the white Dove brought honor upon his teacher.

You might have seen him a man of middle age, whose hair was not yet beginning to turn gray, nor his feet to falter, occupying a most honorable station in the world. A wealthy manufacturer, a benefactor and counsellor of the poor, a hus-

band (of one whom he had married from his own station), bound to his wife by the strong chords of true unceasing affection; a father whose chief hope and endeavor it was, not to leave his children vast fortunes, and high place among men, but a better and nobler heritage, *a good example of a life of virtue*; whose chief object in life it was to attract his children's eyes, constantly, from that loathsome thing whose beauty he knew was so fatally alluring.

You might have seen him in the House of Commons a representative of the hopes and desires of the people—pleading always on the side of right, laboring with all the powers of his mind to secure the good of the masses; swerving never through interest in the path of duty, never heeding or fearing the threats of bad men, but desirous of all things to work some real and permanent good, not that his name should live after him, but that he might alleviate sorrows the like of which he had himself known in his youth—do away with wrongs and abuses which were “grinding the face of the poor.” You might have seen Peter Whitney thus, a man of all men to be envied, holding a place in the hearts of the people so firm and secure, that nothing could invade it—a man of not extraordinary mental power, who by his *moral might* conquered and subdued many a veteran in the hosts of wrong.

V.

There were two men who died one day.

One was nursed by hirelings—for, of his children not one remained beneath his roof, in their home, and his wife in a distant land, forgetful of him and of them, was a reigning queen in the courts of fashion. The offspring of his mind, the children of his genius, his books, were on the tables of the great; the eyes of beauty and of taste loved to look upon them; his name was in the papers, and his fame had gone abroad over the earth; his wealth was still unbounded, but it was a wretched death the Lord of Rossford died.

There was not one satisfying thought left then to cheer, not one hope pointing to the future, not one joy or consolation on which as a “steady help” he might rely. Only one friend was left with him in the hour “when heart and flesh fail”—a bosom

friend it was! The serpent had crept in *there*; it was coiled and lying, in mock humility no longer, at his feet, but cold and heavily it pressed, like an iron weight, upon his heart, and the strength of a Hercules could not have removed it. It sang no longer its sweet, syren songs; it had no more allurements and beguilements, there was no longer *need* for tempting, when the life-deed of sin was wrought; the serpent was become a demon to *fear*, a friend who had by his alluring smiles, destroyed. He died, the Lord of Rossford. They buried him in state. A monarch appeared in his funeral train, the most honorable men of the realm wore the badge of grief; papers were dressed in mourning; obituaries of length narrating all the particulars of the brilliant life of the departed, afforded meat and drink for readers of reflection—ah! had the serpent been suffered to speak as loudly of her dealings with that dead man.

Poems in honor of the “illustrious departed” were written by gifted men, and women tuned their harps to sing their admiration. A biography was written, and emblazoned gorgeously; it occupied a conspicuous place in the libraries of the land; but, after all, Walter Cunningham was a dead man whose soul had gone to judgment; they might pile his memorial stone, but his spirit was alone before God, and the applause and the honor could not surely avail him there!

Doubtless, there were many who were spurred on in the courses of life by his brilliant example, many who were made more ambitious, who became great and honored, who received in their youth fresh impetus from the course of this rich titled man. Yes; and there were his children made miserable for life, by the dissensions, by the disgraceful private history of their parents: children whose high station hardly compensated for the total absence of parental love and care, which they had felt “from their youth up.” Yes, and there was more than one obscure and humble home the great world never heard of, where Walter Cunningham had sown, with his own lordly hand, the seeds of bitterness, of sorrow, and of ruin. Alas, the serpent!

There was another man who died, and was buried; and to

this day his memory remains a blessing on the earth. In the hour when death drew near, the faithful Dove was hovering over his bed, her white wings fanned and revived him; her meek eyes, however, fell not on him, *they* were raised upward, she seemed impatient to bear his spirit away to the land of bliss.

Children were there; and the faithful wife who had shared his early life's struggles, and his after life's blessings. Children whom the mother might always lead, without fear, in the footsteps of their father, wishing for them no greater honor than was theirs already, in being *his* sons.

And there were many besides the dear ones of his household, who in their separate homes prayed for the dying man's recovery, and waited anxiously to know if God would hear their cry. They were men redeemed from despair, whose feet he had set in the right way, whose hearts he had encouraged when they were bowed down with despondency, over the dark sky of whose life his words and kindness had risen, as the rainbow of promise: children to whom he had given labor and remuneration ample, who were content and glad to work when *he* was their master; women whom he had *not* led into temptation, whom he had instead, saved from vice and degradation; girls whom he had encouraged; boys whom his seasonable notice had tended to make worthy men. Most of these had found employment in his factories—a "strike" had never been heard of among them—their wages were sufficient, and never withheld—the "last ounce" was never required of them: their master did not look upon them as mere cattle who were made but to eat, work, and die! It was no wonder therefore that there was weeping and sorrow when this man was departing from among them, for it was not probable that they should soon look upon his like again.

There was a bell that on a funeral day tolled long and mournfully, and was but a faint expression of the grief of the hundreds who gathered at Peter Whitney's burial; there were tears, such as the poor have little occasion to shed often by the graves of the rich, that watered the sod of his grave: there were hearts among those who have but little time to think of

life or death, save of the misery of the one, and the release given by the other, that sorrowed on that day over their dead friend, as very few are lamented when they go hence. There is a monument raised to that man's memory by factory laborers, and he is known *now*, not as a powerful noble, not as a gifted and accomplished author, not as a brilliant man of the world, but as "*the poor man's friend*." There was, moreover, a White Dove which from the day of his death brooded over many another heart, whose pure white radiance made holiness where sin, in the blackness of its darkness, reigned before.

Joy! joy to the man and the woman in whose soul so peaceful and heavenly an influence is reigning!

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

A TRUE STORY.

Long, long ago, there lived in a far country among the mountains, which towered towards heaven much in the manner of mountains now, a young maiden, who must certainly have been one of the progenitors of "the sinless child," for in personal beauty and in excellence and purity of mind, this girl was unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled in her day. "A rare and radiant maiden," albeit unaccomplished and unlearned.

Kind, generous, and affectionate, was Rose May, having withal such a reasonable amount of spirited independence in her nature, as a child born and bred among the "southern wilds," would be like to have.

It was a glorious dwelling-place, that of my heroine. Grant May, her father, was a shepherd, a rugged man of middle age, whose furrowed face bore testimony to the fact that he had encountered and weathered many a hard storm in the course of his life. A true son of the mountains was he; for three or four generations back, his fathers had lived shepherds in these same grand heights, and I doubt much if *this* son of his father could have long endured to breathe the warmer and gentler air of a less elevated home. Occasionally, but at long intervals, he had wandered away to the world below him, but, like the eagle, his eyrie and his affections were fixed amid the towering heights, the rugged scenes, and bracing air of the mountains—there was the home for which nature, and a forty years' residence, had fitted him.

The shepherd's house was built in what, to an eye unaccus-

tomed to such scenes, would seem a most dangerous situation. But it was just the contrary. Erected on the side of a deep ravine, at the bend of the stream, it was sheltered on three sides from the rough, wild winds of winter, and in summer it seemed half buried in the vegetation, which was nowhere on the mountains so abundant as about this place. Above, beneath, and around the cottage, were hardy bushes and flowering shrubs, and towering high above them, the pine trees and the strong-limbed offspring of that rugged clime; and still above the flowers, and the bushes, and pines, spread the bright blue sky, which seemed to rest its mighty arches on the peaks and crags of those great heights.

Yes, it was a glorious home, a noble dwelling place, that of young Rose May! The voice of the southern wind, when it crept so softly up the mountains, and through the branches of the pines, to kiss her brow, and tell her of the wild beauty of the land from which it wandered, was sweet and welcome music to her ear; but no less loved and welcome was the trumpet-blast of the storm, when it came rushing like a fiend past her home, shrieking the challenge of a giant fresh from the fortress where the soldiery of winter were garrisoned—a very Goliath.

Rose loved the flowers, the gay, bright blossoms, which, in mid-summer bloomed about her home; but more keen was her delight in the grandeur which made her heart to thrill, and her blood to leap wildly through its veins, when, on awakening, some dreary mornings of winter, she saw the pine-trees loaded with the wealth of glittering icicles, which glowed and blazed with a splendor, greater than if the treasures of all the kings and princes of earth had been melted and poured over those same stately scions of the soil.

Nature, in all her phases, was beautiful to Rose May. But there was something in the heart of the girl which made her sympathise with, and rejoice more keenly in the grand and terrible shapes the great queen chose to appear in during more than eight months of the year. Therefore was she most truly a daughter, a bright, strong-hearted, noble daughter of the mountains.

They had aptly named this maiden after the pride of all the

flowers; for though there were many sons in Grant May's household, Rose was the only daughter, and she was like a rose indeed, the fairest, as well as the tenderest bud, opening beneath the family roof-tree. The bloom of health was on the maiden's cheek—the glow of health was in her veins, and in the calm beating of her heart, which told so steadily, "all's well."

While the shepherd and his sons were absent from home all day, tending their many flocks, Rose remained with her mother at home, assisting her with willing hands in the domestic toils; and a steady and invaluable help-mate was she; spinning yarn from the sheep her father called her own, and then knitting the proceeds into stout socks and mittens for those who labored out of doors; and ingeniously contriving numerous garments whereby to keep the ears, necks, and feet, of her wild, light-hearted brothers warm in the dreadful winter weather. Rose was in fact quite a pattern maid, never complaining, or caring to rest herself even when she was most weary, if there was still work to be done—and the last thing she would ever have thought to boast of, was ignorance of any part of the book of Domestic Economy, which volume, if you, my dear reader, have had any occasion to thumb, you know very well is not printed in the most readable or understandable type.

Rose May had not many companions. There were, it is true, other families, numbers of them, scattered among the mountains, but these lived at long distances from each other, and they were all so circumstanced as to preclude the possibility of frequent visitings. But when these far-off neighbors did meet, it was with the warm and earnest good feeling which people so situated would be likely to entertain for each other. Perhaps, indeed, their mutual interest was even more sincere and honest, their friendship more generous and truthful, than if they had been able to hold more frequent and familiar communication, partaking, as they all necessarily did, of the mundane nature—for they had scarcely time ever to discover one another's particular failings and short-comings.

There were two families, however, whose members maintained a more familiar intimacy with the household of Grant May, than the other mountaineers, and for this reason—in both these

households there was a son, each only sons, too, who regarded Rose May with fonder eyes than a mere friendly interest would warrant; they both loved her with all the devotion their wild, earnest spirits were capable of—both acknowledged her the queen of the mountain flowers, and the object of their supreme regard.

One of these youths was named Joseph Rancy. His father was the wealthiest of the shepherds—the son would be the old man's sole heir. This fact alone was calculated to greatly enhance the merits of the young man, to make him a favored guest, a much sought-for friend, and an acceptable suitor, especially in the eyes of parents who had a double eye to their daughter's happiness *and* good fortune.

Joseph was a tall, robust, free-spoken youth, with a heart whose honesty forbade his lips ever speaking a word which could not safely be echoed in its recesses. But his very bluntness, though it arose from his honesty of purpose, was not, perhaps, calculated to make him a great favorite with that class of persons *said* to be lovers of soft words and honeyed speeches. Joseph was, however, much liked by Grant May, and all the young brethren of Rose. They admired him for his generosity and daring, and for many noble traits of character which he evinced. The young man knew he stood well in their eyes—but as to her whose favor he cared for more than all the rest, he was yet in a state of doubt and perplexity.

The other youth who so frequently visited Grant's cottage, was Rob Horn. To say Rob was handsome as a picture, would be paying him rather an equivocal compliment: but handsome he was, tall and straight as an Indian, with a bright, smiling face, which (but for a certain treacherous expression sometimes seen lurking about the mouth,) seemed to hail every man a brother and friend. Then his hair was black as the raven's wing, eyes ditto, a becoming bloom on his brown cheeks, graceful, light-hearted, companionable—there you have Rob Horn, my gentle one; is he a person you would suppose Rose May might love?

Rob was an only son, as we stated—but the great difference between him and Joseph Rancy was, that *his* father was far

from being wealthy, having only managed to keep "above board" during all the long years of his earthly pilgrimage.

More than once, Rob had roved from his mountain home to the lowland villages, for his was a restless spirit, and his were roving eyes that grew weary at times of looking on the same grand scenery; still he seemed to retain an unextinguishable affection for his native home, for after a short absence, he always returned to his father's humble cot, with his head full of the strange sights he had looked on in the busy world, but with his curiosity for the time satisfied, and his heart all right towards home. The reason, however, of his invariable return, was, that up in the old Eagle's Eyrie (that is, in Grant May's dwelling), there was a little bird whose wild, free-gushing songs had an attractive power for him.

And among the fairer-faced damsels who lived in the cities, was it possible that none appeared to Rob comparable with the unfettered-by-fashion, Rose? Were there none whose voice, and whose smile were sweet as hers? Let us see.

Sitting by the blazing fire in Grant May's kitchen during the long, pleasant winter evenings, and telling to the gathered family the strange habits and fashions of the people with whom he had occasionally mingled, describing to the wondering children, modes of life which they in their simplicity had never dreamed of, and to the father the latest changes which had occurred in public affairs, and to the mother of the women whose acquaintance he had made, it is not to be supposed that he neglected all the while, and thought not at all of the fair young listener, to please whom he would have talked on forever, had that been necessary; no, indeed, she was not forgotten, for during many years, Rob had been incessantly at work, forming a telegraph route between his heart and her own; he was even then, during those winter evenings, busy in that great work of his life, and ere long he was determined to prove if the work were perfect; but he delayed the first real dispatch—fearing lest it should be uncomprehended, unanswered.

To Rose, Rob had always *seemed* kind, and noble, and honest—all, in short, that man *ought* to be—all that Joseph Rancy was. And a keener insight than she was capable of, or than many mor-

tals possess, (fortunately,) would have been requisite in this case to detect the true gold from the glittering dross. Even when the maiden's father discovered how all the inclination and affection of his child chose Rob instead of Joseph, he did not see any extreme objection in the way to the girl's union with the former; and it was only with a sigh for the fortune which might have been his daughter's, that he gave up all idea of her ever wedding Joseph Rancy.

These two boys had always been the most intimate, and best of friends. In earlier days the visits which they planned together to make their young friend Rose, were unmarked by jealous thoughts; they were the best of all holiday enjoyments. No matter how deep the snow might lie on their path towards Grant May's cot, these appointments made between themselves were always regularly kept; for the thought of the bright faces which ever gave such hearty welcome, and the ready zeal with which a place was made for them by the warm fire, was sufficient inducement for them to brave the coldest weather, and the stormiest day.

But as the two grew older, and learned to distinguish between friendliness and love, they did, sorry am I to tell it, grow jealous of one another—and at last before they had concluded it were better to make these visits to Rose alone, each by himself, when she had unwittingly spoken in a more kindly tone than usual to either of them, and evinced in any way an innocent and thoughtless preference, the other was sure to walk homeward with closed lips and aching heart, in most unsocial mood.

Joseph Rancy had never dared to speak openly to Rose May of love. It was strange that one so stout-hearted as he, with all the advantages of wealth, and much personal beauty, should falter as he tried to tell a simple mountain maid he loved her! Yet it was so. The words refused to obey his bidding when he called to them. He had never lived in those busy places where men and women congregate, yet he did know that "faint heart never won fair lady," and the very knowledge of the truth increased his fears. Poor fellow! he doubted his own power to please, and he knew that Rob Horn was a powerful rival.

Still, Joseph was not one to easily give up a thought he had cherished so long. The hope of winning Rose was too dear to be relinquished—he could never forget that he had loved her, even though she turned a relentlessly deaf ear to his suit—his heart would never be satisfied with the love of another woman. And I say but the truth when I tell you that he was worthy of her love—more worthy, if a less dashing lover than Rob Horn. There was less glitter about him, far more real worth—less of admiration and passion, than deep and earnest love in his thoughts of Rose.

He had placed his hopes on winning her regard; and it is not agreeable with the natural order of things, to suppose that he would forever continue irresolute in a case momentous as this. And so, once again, with the express determination of having his fate at once decided by her, he set out on a summer morning, resolved that his courage should hold out till he had heard his doom from her own lips.

The day was favorable: oh, if the sweet lady would only prove so too! The time also seemed “one of a thousand,” for, before Joseph had half-way reached her father’s house, he met Rose May. She was gathering wild flowers, and when she saw him approaching her, gaily bade him assist her in the pleasant work. I know not if those simple people ever studied the “language of flowers”—perhaps, however, the science is a *natural* one—but this I know, that there was a great preponderance of mountain-roses, buds, and half-opened blossoms, in the flowers Joseph gathered for the little lady. Ah, what a lucky wight! the beautiful summer morning—the silent wood—the naturalness of the offer of his heart with the flowers he gave her! But, notwithstanding the chances were all with him, Joseph *still* hesitated and delayed; and it was not till the flowers were all gathered, and Rose had actually set out on the homeward path, that he nerved himself to the pitch requisite.

And indeed it *was* quite a point of destiny that he had reached; the next step, you see plainly, was an important, an all important one to him. It had been the hope of years that he might win and one day wed Rose May: he had lived in that hope; its out-working had been one of the most blessed of his

thoughts; and now, in five short minutes, (perhaps less,) he would know if this dear dream were to have fruition, or must pass away like the "early dew," leaving him no possibility of indulging in it again—that is, with reason; and Joseph was a reasonable youth.

As I have said, he was uneducated in the schools, and ignorant and innocent of polite learning, therefore he knew but one way of discovering a fact—that was, by asking a question point-blank. When Rose was about emerging from the wood, whence a little path led down the ravine to her father's house, he paused in the walk, and said quite distinctly,

"Wait a moment. I came here to ask you a question I have wanted to ask this long time—will you be my wife?"

"Yours, Joseph?" replied Rose, as honestly and unreservedly as the question had been put,—“Yours?—how can you think of such a thing?"

"I *have* thought of it for years, Rose. You have so many brothers and friends, like enough you have considered me as one of them; but I have no sister, Rose—no friend half so dear as you. It does not strike me that I have asked you such a very strange thing. Perhaps, when you think it all over, the matter will not seem so odd. I would not have you answer me in haste, dear Rose."

"Never, Joseph Rancy," answered she, speaking rapidly, but kindly, though so firm. "I *have* always thought of you as a dear, good friend—that is true; but I can be no more than such to you."

"Is that all, Rose? Oh, think again—you call me your dear friend—be my wife, my best, and dearest friend! Your home is so happy—think of mine lonely and drear as it is now. What a paradise it *might* be, were you there! Rose, dear Rose May, do think again."

"I have thought, Joseph. Do not speak to me so any more—it pains me. There are many others who can make your home as happy—far happier than I can; forget that you have had such thoughts about me, my friend."

"How can I forget?" said he, sadly. "Tell me, Rose," he

added, falteringly, "is there any other—do you love anybody *better* than me?"

"Yes; my father and mother!"

"Not them—I don't mean them; the love I ask is not that kind you give them—is there another—?"

"It is not right in you to ask such questions—you know it is not. Don't make me think the less of you as a friend, by going too far now."

"Forgive me, dearest Rose—I'm going. Don't let what I've said trouble you: I'd let my tongue be seared with hot iron, before speaking what I have to you to-day, if I thought 'twould make you less happy."

"Good-bye, Joseph—now you are what you always have been, generous and good; and if I don't love you as you could wish, I honor you from my heart."

There was a lingering sadness in the maiden's voice as she spoke, that convinced Joseph she was honest in her words, and that she did really grieve that she was the cause of disappointment to him. Yet, that knowledge did not soothe him as he went back to his home, disconsolate and unhappy. Still, Joseph was a young man of sound mind, and he loved Rose May even better than he had before—her very firmness made him respect her—though that firmness was all directed against his suit.

Often as he thought on the immeasurable distance there must forever be, even in thought, between them, so often came the soothing remembrance that it was not lack of worth on his part that made her reject him. Had she not said she honored him? and was not such respect and kindly feeling the highest and the purest kind of love? Might he not, some day, convince her that it was also the ~~best~~ love, the most conducive to happiness in wedded life? Alas, close following this thought, came the death-blow to all hope, for Joseph was convinced that her heart was no longer her own—that she would wed another!

Yes, and there was one she had promised to wed—one for whom she had more than respect—one whom she more than honored—and he none other than Rob Horn! He was the for-

tunate youth whose telegraph-dispatch was successful in receiving a speedy and satisfactory reply !

The home of one of the most powerful of the spirits was in these mountains—a spirit who loved justice and equity—who watched the scales wherein the good and evil were weighed with jealous eye. This powerful being took much interest in the shepherds' affairs ; sometimes she had even deigned to speak to them in her quiet, unostentatious way ; and when she taught them, it was generally on some subject of domestic good or household economy. Almost all her instructions had been of this nature, for they were a quiet, religious people, among whom she lived, giving way rarely to temptation : once or twice, however, the spirit had spoken in rather strong and understandable language to an offender who rarely in his sinful career had any "compunctious visitings."

No one had ever seen her bodily, yet there was but one person who dared doubt the spirit's actual existence, but one who would not recognise her power ; and who should this reckless one be but the wild youth, Rob Horn. *He* dared say and say openly, that there was never such a being in existence, and that from the very nature of things there never could be.

It was the only point in her lover's character that gave rise to fears in the mind of Rose May—this skepticism. For Rose had always been a firm believer in spiritual existences ; and often, but unavailingly, had she besought Rob to, at least, speak in a manner more respectful of the powerful agent, who would, she knew, work him wo, if he continued obdurate in his belief. But there was nothing in the natural world the young man feared—no danger he dared not brave—why, then, tremble at the unseen, unknown, unheard ? Why give heed to the superstitious fears of old women and maidens ? Instead of being able in this instance to convince her lover, Rose after all was herself almost persuaded by his jests and ridicule, to doubt the existence, at least the great power of that which she had never seen or heard. She began to give place in her mind to Rob's words, that it *was* the idlest thing in the world to believe in such romantic stories. But as yet Rose had kept her growing infidelity to herself—she would not have dared breathe to her

mother even, her strengthening doubts—perhaps it was well for her that she did not dare.

It was night—the night previous to his bridal day—and at a late hour Rob left his lady-love, and took the rough path that led him to his own dwelling-place. The happy fellow, if we may judge from facts, was in a most delightful state of mind, well-pleased with himself, his bride-to-be, and all the world beside. “To-morrow was his wedding-day,” and ever thereafter Rose May, the brightest flower of the mountains, was his own. Well might he rejoice.

In a few days, after the festivities following the great occasion were over, Rob, with his wife, were to journey to the nearest large town, to spy out the wonders of the strange land—which plan was half enough to make young Rose wild with joy, for the greatest multitude she had ever seen gathered together, met on the Sabbath days, in the little church to worship.

It was a bright, moonlit night, the soft light streamed over the path he was to tread, as Rob returned home. The parting kiss of Rose was warm on his forehead; he fancied she was beside him walking in the same path, and nearly all the way he talked sweet words of love, as though she were by to hear. When the young man nearly reached his home, he encountered Joseph Rancy. These two had been far from cordial in their greetings of late, and with good reason; for Rob’s manner to Joseph had been that of triumph—Joseph’s that of a man heart-sore, and jealous of the success of his rival.

But this night Joseph Rancy had come out with the express purpose of meeting his old friend—to speak with him in the manner of by-gone times, as kindly, and as generously. When he had come up directly in front of Rob, he was still unobserved; he paused then, and held out his hand, saying—

“I came out on purpose to meet you, Rob.”

Horn took the proffered hand in his own, and said—

“I am truly glad to see you, Rancy; we have not met of late.”

“No, we haven’t been the friends we once were. I have shunned you—because—because you seemed to triumph over

me, Rob. You, who have been so successful where I failed miserably."

"Was it *my* fault that I won Rose May? tell me that," replied Horn sharply. "Where's the blame, then, if I did rejoice?"

"No *blame*, none, none," said Joseph; "you have been fortunate, indeed; I wish you and yours much joy, Rob, now and ever."

"Hold," cried Rob, as Joseph turned away, "you will come to the church to-morrow, will you not? You will wish to see Rose married."

"Rob! no—I can bear to know that you are going to marry her—I can hope and pray for you both—but to see her married to another! You will not *need* me there."

These words were spoken in a tone of deep reproach, and Joseph went off quickly as he spoke them, leaving Rob to pursue the home-path alone. The only answer he returned for his friend's grief, was a smothered laugh, which, stifled as it was, in the stillness of the night, Joseph heard distinctly.

All that night, the disappointed seeker after peace sat on the opposite bank of the ravine, where he might look on the dwelling-place of Rose May—and all that night he prayed for her happiness, and strove hard to banish all unfriendly thoughts towards Rob from his mind. But when the morning came, long before the sun rose, he wandered away among the mountains, that he might be far from the place where she would be given to another.

Rob went on to his home—the cot was still as sleep itself, for his father and mother had retired to their rest hours before. He went to his chamber, and soon, upon the easy couch, he also slept. And then he dreamed—of course it was of his young and beautiful bride, the girl whom he would be so proud to hear the old priest pronounce his wife. But, though he could only dream of her, it does not follow that his night-visions were pleasant.

He fancied that the spirit of the mountain (the same in whose existence he had doubted so long,) came to him with an angry frown upon her countenance. He trembled, yes, actually,

he, the strong, iron-willed youth, trembled when he looked on her—he had never quailed before. When she had come quite close to his bedside, and rested her hand upon his shoulder, (where it lay like lead,) and gazed so sternly upon him, Rob said,—

“Why dost thou come here to disturb me and trouble my dreams, thou terrible shape?”

And the spirit answered :

“Tell me, instead, what is it thou art about to do?”

“That is quickly said—to-morrow I shall marry Rose May, the loveliest maid the sun ever shone upon.”

“Ah, Rob Horn ! Rob Horn !” said the spirit sternly, interrupting him, “bethink thee what it is thou wilt do ; bethink thee what has become of thy betrothed in the distant village ? does she wear thy ring, does she remember thy kiss and thy love-vows ? What of *her*, Rob Horn ?”

When the spirit spoke thus, Rob was amazed, and he could not conceal it : his face became suddenly very red—was it the confusion of guilt ? Soon he rallied again, and said,

“I cannot marry two wives ; I have loved Rose all my life, I *must* marry her ; the maiden in the village can find another bridegroom.”

“Thou art not worthy to wed one like Rose May—but there *is* one worthy, over whom thou hast triumphed many a time, and even this very night, because thou hast chanced to be more successful than he ; beware, thou may’st go too far.”

“Too far ! she will be mine to-morrow—what power in heaven or earth can separate us ? She is mine—mine—mine !”

“Thou may’st deceive thyself. I ask thee, wilt thou not give up Rose May, and betake thee to the pale and sorrowful maid, who has waited for thy coming long ?”

“Give *her* up ? my Rose ? never ! thou fool, to ask it of me !”

“Yet I do ask thee again—wilt thou not be just ? Do that which thine honor requires ; the girl thou hast deserted will die.”

“Be Death her bridegroom, then ! Who art thou, to take my Rose from me ? She is mine—I will wed no other.”

“Why so sure ? Did ever such wickedness as is in thee prosper ? Thou hast a bad heart, Rob Horn, and a thousand

things may come between thee and her, even after the priest proclaims her thine. Nothing is sure or stable for one like thee. Give her up now, or beware! a fate more terrible than thou canst think, may be in store for thee!"

"Begone, thou prating idiot! Rather will I give up my life than Rose, my bride, my beautiful!"

So firmly was this third repetition of his determination spoken, that Rob awoke, and, as might be supposed, he found himself alone, and the sunlight streaming brightly through his little window. Heartily congratulating himself that it was all a dream, the young man arose, and, ere long, had tastefully adorned himself with the new raiment prepared for the momentous occasion.

The morning was verging towards noon, when, in the little church, the wedding-party gathered before the altar.

There was beautiful Rose May and her handsome bridegroom, and, after the manner of things of necessity, the twain never in their lives looked so charmingly as then. And there were the parents of the plighted ones, happy as parents might be, who believed they were about to witness the consummation of their children's joy. There, also, were all the young brothers of Rose, bright and smiling as such youngsters on these occasions invariably are. These were all gathered about the altar: the body of the church was nearly filled with the young friends of the to-be-married ones, and the sturdy old mountaineers, with their wives.

It would not be strictly cleaving to truth, to say that Rob Horn was wholly at ease that morning. That strange night-dream tormented him. It was foremost in his mind, claiming even in that holy hour, more of his thought than the girl who leaned, in trustful fondness, on his arm. Why should a merely ugly dream annoy him so! Had he really a promised bride in the far-off village? Have patience with me,—you shall know it all.

They were kneeling before the altar. The consecrated hands of the old priest were raised in blessing above them; he was about pronouncing the uniting words; and Rob, the bridegroom, was thinking, even then, that if there were, in reality, such creatures as spirits, he had overpowered his visitant at least, when

suddenly there came a shape of light floating through the open door of the church. It moved on noiselessly through the holy edifice, above the heads of the astonished and alarmed congregation, until it came to the altar, and there paused. Then a voice, soft and thrilling as the summer breeze, yet distinctly audible to every person gathered there, said,

"Rise, Robert Horn, thou *shalt not* speak the marriage vows."

And, pale as death, Rob, unable longer to resist, lifted up himself.

Then, distinctly as before, the voice said,

"Did I not tell thee to beware? Did I not forbid thee to wed this maid, thou who hast another plighted to thee, one who waits and watches, wondering at thy long delay? Did I not bid thee beware—and thou couldst laugh at my words! Answer me, Robert Horn."

The bridegroom lifted his eyes to the Shape, and said,—how his voice trembled!

"Thou *didst* bid me beware, but I am here, notwithstanding; here to take this woman for my wife; whosoever thou art, thou canst not, and shalt not part us."

"Thou hast sealed thy fate," answered the spirit of the mountain—"for thy wickedness, thy falseness, thy unbelief, thou shalt be banished away from the earth forever! And it shall be a part of the misery of thy banishment, that once in every month, from thy prison-house, thou shalt look down upon this lower world. Thou shalt see, and know, and *feel*, all the pangs, and the bliss, and the glory of love, yet shalt thou hereafter share it never with a mortal. The water-brooks, the oceans, and the seas, shall reflect thy image, and thou shalt know the bitterness of seeing even these unconscious, soulless things, careless of thee. Thou shalt live on for years, till they are counted by centuries; long after she whom thou hast so shamefully deserted, sleeps the quiet, blessed sleep of death. Thou shalt live to mourn and to lament over a fate thou canst not change. Thy doom is more dreadful than thou canst yet conceive! Come, wait not even for *her* last embrace. Come—come—come!"

Swiftly away they passed, the spirit and the wifeless bridegroom, without pausing for one parting look, or kiss, or word,

with the trembling girl, the promised bride. In an instant the little church was vacant, and without its walls might be seen gathered a group of terrified people—foremost among them the widowed Rose, gazing upon the far upward flight of poor Rob Horn.

The new moon that night came up in all her glorious beauty, and sailed on calmly over the broad, blue, upper sea; night after night she glided over the vast expanse, unfurling gradually wider and wider her sails, till in full and perfect splendor she at last appeared. And then, yes *then*, Rose May beheld her lover once more; but oh that shadowy glimpse she caught of him was worse to her than had she looked on utter vacancy. She *knew* that he was gazing on her home, that he looked on her with despair, but alas! she saw no more the tender light once filling his beautiful, dark eyes: she heard no words from his silenced lips, and it was like a torturing dream to look upon him thus, and fancy all the horrors of his banishment.

And what of Rob? He dwells in moon-land yet! amid those elevated mountains, instead of the dear wild heights, his dwelling place on earth. Whoever could have dreamed the wretched Wandering Jew, had an unknown companion in yon bright sphere, whose lot was yet more miserable than his own? Who ever thought a "breach of promise" might be visited on unfaithful man, in quite another and more effectual way than by laying strong hold on his most precious purse-strings?

Oh, ye soft-hearted maidens, I pray you henceforth bear in mind *who* is the captive knight to whom so oft your fond eyes are directed: "oft in the stilly night" when he doth stand on the brink of those "moon-mountains," gazing so sadly on the world beneath, remember ye this story I have told, and turn away, and leave him quite alone. Sing not in pensive strains the praise he loves to hear; laud not the beauty of the exile's home, for oh, his strained ear is quick to catch your words; his eye is clear to note your admiration. Let him not gladden in one word from you!

And ye gay-hearted knights, so strong to promise, and so slow to do, ye who do count it pastime to win woman's love, and then to fling it aside as a poor flower whose fragrance is

quite lost, be ye too warned in time, for spirits *are*, and moon-land yet may find room in its borders for your feet!

And now what more remains for me to tell? You have guessed, I know, how the warm-hearted spirit taught Rose May, that Joseph Rancy possessed all the good and attractive qualities of the lost lover, with none of his sins and follies! You have guessed that one gay morning the old church doors were opened for another bridal party; that young Rose stood again in marriage garments before the altar, and Joseph by her side. You have guessed how the spirit once more glided through the "place of prayer," to add her blessing to that which the priest pronounced over the bridegroom and the bride!

Why speak of the happy home where Joseph Rancy dwelt with his beautiful lady-love? Why tell of that wedded bliss, which people for the most part have heard already of, or else desire in an especial manner to hear of, and to know? Why say that all the teachings and advice which the spirit deigned to administer to these blest mortals, was ever received and heeded by them with the utmost care and gratitude?

Do you believe in dreams? No!—why not? Have you indeed yet to learn that through them the good spirits whisper to us advice, and peace, and warning, and consolation! are you so cold and dull, as to believe that there are no ministering spirits, no guiding, guardian angels? Do you, can you scornfully repel the idea, that the forests, and mountains, the oceans and the plains, have their myriad viewless, intellectual inhabitants? Ah, foolishly unwise—may these powerful agents have mercy on you, and charitably bear with your shameful, wilful blindness!

ABOUT A GENIUS.

We wither from our youth, we waste away,
Sick, sick, unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst.
BYRON.

IN summer-time there are few things more delightful, than an occasionally wet day, to "out-of-towners."

Then we of the country in our almost noiseless homes, may delight in the strange and pleasant quietness attending a still, steadily-falling rain; we can watch with admiring eyes how the fields, and the well-draped woods, grow bright and cleanly 'neath the hand of that pattern housekeeper, Dame Nature; we can listen, undisturbed by the multitudinous noises which infest a city, to the dear wild birds, who, impatient of the long continued weeping of the skies, occasionally break forth into the merriest songs, as if questioning each other as to how the changes of the elements were borne.

And then there is the generous sun-king, (I acknowledge, however, he does not live for country people *only*), glancing out at intervals from between the heavy clouds, smiling upon us joyously, and looking for all the world as though he would say if he *could*, "never mind, children, the storm will soon be over." And then the after-part of the summer shower! the freshened fragrance of the flowers, the purified atmosphere, the bright blue sky, the glory of the setting sun, the rainbow in the east, the drops of water glistening on the flowers and on the grass, so pure and bright that one might almost imagine them the tears of spirits, the glad songs of innumerable birds, the groups of children exhibiting in various ways their nautical

daring on and about the newly-formed lakelets in the roads and fields, then the holy calmness of the ensuing night, the soft light of the stars, and after that the trembling glory of the new moon! Oh beautiful, beautiful summer-time, how precious are thy smiles and tears!

But—a rainy day in winter! Its horrors encircle me as I write! deliver me from entering into *its* details! However much *you* may delight in a day like unto this, oh listener to this humble voice emerging from the wayside, *I* have no courage to *speak* even, of the stubborn, hard-headed, cheerless figure Nature presents when she stands gazing in such mute dismay upon her domicile.

It is in human nature, at least in mine, and I claim to be human, to be always looking for *a something better*, and despite all this dreariness without, my heart is continually singing, “spring is coming! spring is coming!” But a few weeks! and then, instead of the dismal trappings of winter, how beautiful and bright all without and around us will be! The very thought is enough to make every soul shout, “hasten the time! amen!” There is such a desolateness about the white-headed old monarch, that people shrink from his appearance as *they* grow old in years!

Looking back with the eyes of childhood on these stony-hearted months, when frost and snow reign king and queen over earth, they seem indeed the most joyous—and not without reason. For then the “Christman,” and the youth so full of promise, the bright New Year, are never-failing guests by the mid-winter fireside. There is joy for the child on the ice-bound hill, on the glassy frozen lake, in the jingling, merry sound of sleigh-bells, in the blaze of the cheerful home-fire, in the bracing out door air, in the huge snow-drifts,—everywhere, everywhere there is joy for the child.

And why? Because of bounding hopes and joyous dreams, and the careless yielding up of oneself to every passing enjoyment; because of freedom from labor; because of ignorance of the worth and supremacy of gold; because of utter innocence of the strict “proprieties” of life! There is joy for the child because he has not yet learned much of disappointments; he

does not know how comfortless is the close-fitting garment of manhood. He is not wise enough to see in the winter storms, in the driving blasts which so delight him, types of what assuredly await him. He does not know that the life-storms with which he will have to struggle, will come suddenly and furiously upon him; that he will perforce then fling aside his mittens, and grapple open-handed with his foes. And it must certainly be at the warm and genial hearth-fire of truth and honesty, and no stifling stove-heat, by which he must keep his heart and his hopes, and affections warm, and in health, else they will die away suddenly and utterly, even as the fire of the "patent air-tight" dies!

Hark! now I hear the flapping of wings; and, lo! here, close beside my window, are passing pigeons—snow-white pigeons; and, where *could* it have streamed from? there is a ray of light, real *sunlight*, on their wings! and, since I have begun writing, the clouds seem to have "spent their fury,"—they are less dull and dreary—they are slowly breaking away.

The view from my window is not especially charming. In one direction there are sheds, and barns, and barren trees; and, a little farther on, the spire of an unpretending church, and sundry chimney-tops, together with the roofs of a few loftier buildings, meet my eye. These, certainly, are all very *suggestive* scenes, and might make so many important heads of a very interesting discourse; but, in another direction from this same window, there are great fields, and farther on, woods and hills—between which and my home, there are two points in the landscape whereon my eyes very often rest, and many are the recollections, bitter and sweet, they awaken. One is a village school-house—the other a thickly-populated grave-yard.

Over these hills, and through the woods, and by the sandy shores of our beautiful lake, I was once a frequent wanderer; and with me then invariably in all those roving, was a child of somewhere near my own age, to whom, good reader, you may now consider yourself introduced.

Looking over one's past is not an over-pleasant business at any time. There are very many reasons why people, for the most part, dread the rolling up of that curtain within which lies

buried much of destroyed confidence, and love that died of fearful wounds ; but I am willing to trespass on my own feelings that you may know something of Lily Reeve.

People said she was a genius. They said rightly—she was. And, to complete the interest attachable to her therefor, Lily was poor—*very* poor—and had been all the days of her life.

When the Reeve family moved to C——, they had no acquaintance or relative in our village ; and their circumstances were not such as would attract any notice towards them. Had it not been for Lily, they would probably have remained long enough in our midst unknown and uncared for. The mother was a middle-aged woman—a widow : of the children I knew not much, save that, with much appropriateness, their name might have been “legion.” Lily was the eldest child, not beautiful, and far from interesting, personally.

Why her parents had bestowed on her so decided a name as Lily, was always a mystery,—for she was very far from resembling, even in the slightest degree, that graceful flower. Neither was she a brunette, but of complexion rather dark, hair *very* black, and always curled, which gave her a decidedly Mrs. Heman-ish look at times. Her features were irregular—oh, certainly, she was *far* from beautiful,—and yet there was much sweetness of expression in the mouth, and much of vigor and determination perceivable in her large, dark eyes.

It was a good many years ago, but I remember distinctly the first time I ever saw Lily. With a number of juveniles, I was returning from a long walk—all our foot-jaunts were long in those days—when, on passing by an old-fashioned frame-house, brown with age, and poor and disconsolate in its outward appearance, one of the group said, “Let’s go into that house ; a girl lives there who paints.”

And we went in. One of the more confident of our number said to the woman who received us, “Will you show us some of the pictures your daughter has painted ?”

With a smile of satisfaction, as though she were pleased that even we children should have heard of her Genius, the woman bade us sit down ; and then she brought from an old chest a handful of papers, and spread them on the table before us.

Some of these were pictures of warriors on their steeds, others were landscapes, and some heads. There was one which more than all the rest attracted my attention and curiosity, the likeness of a sleeping child. We asked if this were one of her children, or only a fancy sketch?

"That was her little brother who died," replied the woman with a sigh. "Lily drew it when he was dead." There was something so sad in the mother's voice as she said this, that it checked our gay spirits, and tended to subdue our loud expressions of admiration. While we yet stood turning over the papers, and gazing in wonder on the work of a girl no older than the youngest of us, the subject of our thoughts came into the room.

When she perceived our object there, she came up to the table, and putting her arm around me as though sure she was among friends, she asked if we liked her drawings. I remember well the thrill which passed over me at this simple movement, for I had begun to regard the girl as something quite extraordinary, and almost more than human. From that day I date a friendship I am proud to have formed—one which, while it lasted, delighted me more than any similar tie I have ever known.

It was easy to see that the heart of the mother in those days was full of hope—that the mind of the daughter teemed with ambitious desires—and a determination, apparently invincible, to accomplish great things. About that time, there were many people who turned prophets, and looking into the future—they saw another name added to America's illustrious daughters of song—the name of Lily Reeve. Do you think their prophecy has proved true?

In the old school-house, (which, I heartily regret to say, has been of late abandoned, and its former inmates have taken possession of a more stately edifice up-town,) in that little old brick building, *we*, in the years long, long gone by, were wont to assemble—and Lily joined us there. And although on the humdrum route of *learning* we were quite in the advance, she soon very far outstripped us, and moved on with most rapid strides through all the first branches of education. It was im-

possible for us dullards to see her strange advancement, and not feel a little curious of her ability, notwithstanding we liked Lily so well. In one short year, she had acquired nearly all the instruction it was possible for our teacher to impart; and, as may be supposed, he watched her progress with considerable anxiety. But the man's honor, as an instructor, was not destined to be sacrificed to the young girl's genius.

One afternoon, when school was dismissed, Lily said to me, "You and I will go home by the other street. I have something to tell you, and that way will be longer. Besides, I want to be away from these rough boys and girls."

So we crossed the road, and entered a path which led us by a long way home. When we had reached the bridge which crossed a deep, rapidly-running brook, we sat down on the bench placed in the shade of an old tree, which, from time immemorial, has stood there with the most of its tangled roots buried in the water; then Lily spoke again, for the first time since we went out from the school-house.

"Do you know they are going to send me to the other school—they think I can learn more there, and have teachers in the higher branches, and in the languages. Oh, dear!"

"But why that 'oh dear!' Lily? I only wish I could go there too; but I am such an ignoramus, and *you* know everything!"

"Not quite everything. I *should* be glad to go, and there are a great many reasons why. I have the greatest desire to learn, and I'm sure if I have a little more education, I can make my way easily through the world; but—but—in short, they are rich people who are going to send me, and they will expect miracles from me, you may depend on it—I know. Because I am poor, and can write pretty well, and sketch likenesses, and paint, they have taken an interest in me; but, I tell you beforehand, and you will see before long I am right, that I shall have to work like a slave to keep up with their expectations. Isn't it enough to make anybody say 'oh, dear?'"

"No; I don't think so. You *can't help* coming up to their expectations—and they have such nice teachers in that other school—and no great rude boys go there."

"That makes no difference at all. One can learn in one place as well as another. If it were not that mother felt so glad when the ladies made her the offer to send me there, I'd never go. You don't know anything about what it means to be dependent: you can't think what a heavy load seems laid on me, ever since so many of these folks have begun to talk about me, and 'take an interest,' as they call it. I really begin to doubt my own powers. It seems to me that my mind *ought not* to be forced like a plant in a hot-bed. I almost wish I never had any particular gifts."

"And you say this, Lily Reeve, when all the girls in town are envying you? Now just be firm, for I'm *sure*, if you only make up your mind you *will* do a thing, you *can* do it."

"Do you believe it?" she asked, so suddenly and earnestly, that I was startled, and began in some trepidation to bethink my words.

"Certainly," I answered at last. "I heard our minister say the other day, that your verses were excellent; and you *know* your pictures sold well at the fair. How can you doubt yourself so?"

"I don't know," said Lily, thoughtfully; "perhaps they are nearer right than I dare think them—but—I cannot explain it to you. I am never satisfied with anything I do. My verses always sound so rough in comparison with the melody in my brain; and my pictures, when I begin them, my fingers almost fly—I think I will surpass everything that has been done—and when they are finished, they always look so rude and rough, that I am tempted often to burn them."

"Never mind," said I, confidently, "you will see the day when all will be more bright; and you know the teacher says 'practice makes perfect,' and he always looks at you when he says it—you ought to have learned that by this time."

"I'll learn it now from you," said Lily; "we'll go now to the woods. I want to get some flowers to take to mother."

Just beyond the woods to which we then bent our steps, there was a large field, in the upper portion of which, early in the season, we always found multitudes of purple flowers and white lilies. Our first business that night was to fill our aprons with

these treasures, then we went into the woods and sat down in a most romantic place, and began to arrange our huge boquets. Lily made hers into little bunches for each of her family, while I twined mine into a wreath and laid it on her head. But soon the increasing shade in the woods warned us that it was time to be returning home.

The thought of the obligation she was about incurring, evidently still troubled my companion's mind, for she spoke but little, and then her words were desponding, and even the bright flowers with which her hands were filled, failed to attract her attention, or to awaken the delight they did usually.

We were about crossing the stile that was placed at the entrance of the wood, when Lily suddenly flung the beautiful green moss she had gathered in a damp place, with violence from the bosom of her dress, where she had laid it. And when I looked with amazement at the excited girl, she exclaimed, "Look there! I had a snake in my bosom!" Truly enough, there was a tiny, striped, infant snake, creeping out leisurely from the bunch of moss she had flung upon the ground. A thought darted through my mind—I grasped her arm and said,

"You shall hear the moral of this before you go a step farther, Lily Reeve. I'm no genius, but I'll teach you a plain lesson: you have thrown the snake away from you; don't—don't *ever* take it back again. Don't doubt those who mean to do you a kindness; only just do what nature intended you should, and all who know you will be satisfied! When you come to be very famous, the people who help you now, will think you did them a favor in letting them aid you. Mother says, perseverance will work wonders—*you* can prove it."

When I had finished my oration, I stood somewhat astonished at my own audacity; but after a moment's silence Lily said,

"Thank you, thank you—for you have learned me two lessons; I'll not forget them. No, I will *never* take the serpent back—depend on that."

A few days after this, Lily was established at the larger school, dwelling with other boarders in the family of the prin-

cial, the wonder of all the scholars, and the pet pupil with the teachers.

The hopeful expectations of the dear girl's family were kept up by her progress, and by her own increasing courage and cheerfulness. And in reality the expectation they cherished of her being soon able to support them all by dint of her genius seemed no unfounded one. Her work became daily more worthy and more promising now that she possessed these superior advantages; fortune seemed really determined to work good things for the rich people's protégé.

Lily was not yet seventeen, but her poems had many of them attracted much attention. Injudicious praises were lavished upon her; by their attentions and flattery, the proud, and the rich, and the learned, seemed to have conspired to spoil a girl, a school-girl poor "from her youth up." They did not take it into consideration that it was quite possible for them to raise her hopes and self-appreciation too high—they did not give heed to the fact that it might require years of struggling and disappointment for her to produce anything worthy the reward and honor they would fain believe were rightfully hers even then.

But soon enough they had cause to regret the course they adopted.

"A change came o'er the spirit of her dream."

Self-confidence rapidly usurped the place of a befitting humility, which had once characterized her. Instead of comparing herself with the great masters of song and painting, Lily seemed to think that in outstripping all her schoolmates, and in being considered a prodigy among teachers, she was rapidly filling the measure of her greatness; and the laudations which good-will prompted others to speak, instead of being valued at their worth, came at last to be considered as quite true and well-deserved.

It is said that more strength of mind is requisite to bear composedly a sudden *favorable* turn of fortune, than is necessary calmly to endure reverses. Having never had occasion to test the truth of the proposition, I of course have only a right to *sup*

pose there is somewhat of reason in it. At all events, that is a very easy way by which to account for Lily's derelictions.

It was the wish of her "patrons," as well as of the kind lady to whose care she was chiefly entrusted, that Lily should finish the course of studies apportioned to each scholar previous to graduating. But there was a growing willfulness, an increasing confidence in her own attainments, that tempted her to set at nought all these desires. Her impulsive nature longed to be free from all restraint; she would fain throw aside all bondage, together with the loathed idea of dependence, and labor for herself in the way she was best fitted to labor. She wished to begin *at once* to reap the reward of years of study (a natural wish, but how wild a one, too many might testify!) and thus to alleviate the wants of her home.

So, despite all the remonstrances and pleadings of those who now began to see their mistake in their dealings with the young girl, Lily left the school, and returned to her own home.

I shall never forget her as she was at that time. The passions, hopes, desires, and resolution of mature years, seemed to have even then a full development in her. In feeling she had grown too old, in will too decisive, to submit patiently to the judgments of other minds. But soon enough was the lesson forced upon her that poetic efforts are rarely changed *at once* for food, and fuel, and raiment.

"I have sent a poem of some length to ———," she said to me one day, naming a distinguished writer and editor, "and you know I am superstitious—if he accepts it and will pay me for it, I shall take it as a good omen for my future; but if he does not—" she hesitated.

"Well, if he does not, Lily?"

"Then those horrid doubts will come back with renewed force! Oh, they tormented me so once!"

When I saw my friend again there was no need to ask what her reception at the editor's table had been. It was a freezing cold winter night, and feeling somewhat disconsolate on my own account, as well as rather curious in regard to Lily's progress, I sought her in her own home.

I found her there, seated at the centre-table, yes, it was such,

for it occupied the central portion of the apartment, but it was not of polished mahogany or marble-surfaced, gentle reader, but a miserable, old, broken affair, that had seen its best days long before it came into the possession of its present owners. Scattered about the room were the numerous boys and girls of the family—there was little temptation even for them abroad that night, it was so cold and stormy.

The room in which they lived was the upper story of a small building, the first floor of which, -was occupied as a mechanic's shop; it was partitioned by a curtain of cloth, which was all the separation between the sleeping apartments, and the place where they cooked, and ate, and lived.

There was a deep silence in the room when I entered. Lily was occupied with her drawing, lighted by two tapers burning in a cup half-filled with oil. There was none of that cheerful hope beaming in her fine eyes that usually filled them when she welcomed me; and all the faces in the room looked doleful enough; some new rebuff they had certainly met.

"I am drawing this for you," she said when I sat down beside her, and looked at her work. "It is for a parting gift."

"Parting!" I exclaimed. "What are you going to do now? Were you successful in your letter to Mr. —?"

"Read and see," she said, producing a letter.

And I read as follows:—

"MISS REEVE.—Dear Madam, Your favor was many days since received, and now, at my first leisure, I hasten to reply. I regret that an answer, similar to that given many applicants during every week, must be returned you. And I regret this the more, because your poetry shows talent: but—you need much practice; and, permit me to say, a writer must usually have acquired *some reputation* before he can receive any 'golden rewards.' If you are necessitated to labor, I would advise you that there are many ways less vexatious, and more certain as to their issue, in which you might successfully employ yourself.

"I retain the MS. subject to your orders.

"Respectfully, &c.,

"———."

It was with difficulty that I could repress my tears, as I looked around that cheerless room, and on the young girl whose disappointment I knew must be so keen. But calmly and apparently undisturbed, she continued her drawing.

"What will you do now, Lily?" I asked, anxious to at least break the embarrassing silence.

"We are going West next week."

"West? where—how?"

"To Indiana. I have borrowed the money; we cannot stay here and starve. If I cannot get a living by writing, there *are* many other ways, and I will at least try them."

The picture she was drawing—I have it yet—was an imaginative, and a striking one. It was a moonlight scene. Beside the water's edge, among wild rocks, a girl was standing alone; the figure was a perfect likeness of herself. The *expression* of the sketch was touching.

"She is looking for peace there," said Lily, in explanation. "She has sought it so often, but has not found it—and she never will."

"Does she seek it in the right way, Lily?"

"I don't know. Everything seems changed to me of late. I am bewildered, it seems to me as though I had lost myself. Since that letter came, I doubt my powers more than ever. To think of one in my situation having to *practice* before I can work successfully! There is little time to practice, I think, when eight human beings are wondering where their next meal is to come from—when their wood-yard is in such a state of emptiness and depression as ours is!"

The mother sighed heavily as Lily said this, but did not speak.

"You certainly can do something *here*," I cried. "Don't go and bury yourself in the backwoods. I'm sure you can be a teacher in our school here, if you will only ask. It's perfectly wild in you to think of going this winter! Travelling, you know, at this time of the year is a very costly business, dear Lily, besides being so cheerless!"

"There is no use in talking about it. I should love to live here, for my own part, all my life, but I have engaged a school

in the town we are going to, and they wish it to be opened early in the spring. There's no help for it, we must go."

And they went.

From that day, until within a few months, I heard nothing in regard to the Reeve family. Lily had promised to tell us of her experience in the West, of her success in this new attempt at securing a livelihood; but her promise was unfulfilled, and we could but fear lest despondence had utterly crushed all the aspirations of her genius—that if she yet-lived, poverty and hopelessness had come to be her only portion.

Still, though her name had never reached us through the medium talents like hers choose for their utterance—the press—I had always a lingering hope and belief that Lily had, under some assumed name, made herself famous. Knowing so well her ability, the more I thought of this, the clearer became my conviction that it was so. At last, thinking of her continually in my waking hours, and dreaming of her night after night, it became absolutely necessary that I should write to her once more—a thing I had not done in many years—in order to discover if she were actually dead or alive, famous, or unknown to the world. It was with much anxiety, as all my lady-readers will believe, that I awaited her reply, for an answer, I felt convinced, I should receive. It came at last,—and as people such as she are regarded by the world as a species of public property, that is, as far as their thoughts, words, and deeds, are concerned, I have few scruples in laying her epistle open for public inspection, knowing that some good must come of the trespass!

"I have but just received your letter, dear friend of by-gone days, and believe me, the thought that you remember me, and with interest still, has given me no little satisfaction. I am inclined to laugh, and weep, and wonder, when I think of myself as I was in the days long ago, when we lived among you so very poor and dependent; but there is a feeling of gratitude in my heart, stronger than every other emotion, now excited in my breast by the freshened remembrance of my old home.

"You ask me what I have been doing, and wish to know under what name I have 'immortalized' myself. You will not believe that I left behind me all my ambitious desires when we made our abode here in the West! Have you ever chanced to hear of ———? It is the name I adopted when I first appeared before the reading world. Perhaps you may have observed it—perhaps have read verses accompanying it—but I am confident you never recognised in those merry strains, the voice and heart-tune of your once poverty-stricken, and desponding friend."

[The reader may imagine my astonishment on reading these words, for my correspondent, Lily, was none other than a most beloved and popular writer.]

"I feel conversational, to-day; besides, I know it is but just to assure those who were so generous in my days of adversity, that their money and sympathy were not altogether thrown away. I was *very fur* from being forgetful of those who, in my earlier years, rendered me such valuable and efficient aid; but I thought it better, even at the risk of being considered ungrateful, to remain unknown to them and to you, until I should be able to reflect some little credit upon them. I shall soon publish a book which is dedicated to those friends of former years; through that I hope to relieve myself of any charge of forgetfulness or coldness, that they may have justly brought against me.

"It is only ten years since we first made our home in the Western world: but I have grown gray in feeling, since then, and looking back into my childhood, the road to it seems one of interminable length. Decidedly as our fortunes have brightened, we have had our struggles and heart-sorrows here, also; we have had much of sickness, too, which seems to await almost every settler in the West: but there is so much good for which we should be thankful, that it seems almost a sin even to revert to our first trials and vexations. My mother, thank heaven! now that she is old, may rest; her latter years are not harassed with the thought and the care of an impoverished, dependent family; my brothers are in a way, all of them, to support themselves, and my young sisters are being educated in such a manner, that they will never have to rely on others for their sup-

port. And for all these blessings, I pray we may ever be thankful.

"When we first came to this place, all things were decidedly *new*. The, inhabitants, men, women and children, truly seemed to have reflected in their own natures, the marvelous *greenness* and freshness of the close-surrounding forests; the village was poor, like all new places, and not one quarter its present size. Indeed, we call it a city now.

"But you can never imagine what a house of refuge it was to us poor people! I was glad from my heart that there were none rich, none powerful here—that all was one grand level, above which wisdom and strength of mind, and superior goodness, alone might rise. I was glad, I say, for despise it as you may, I am bold to acknowledge there was something awfully repelling to me in the thought of looking *up* to people, because they happened to be rich, or occupied by right of birth, a high station. Even the notice taken of me in my young days, was galling to me—you knew that—it savored too much of a condescension, which, child as I was, I despised and hated. There were many children here when my school was first opened—for many years it was the *only* school—how well it has been patronized, I need not say; but I prospered and was contented.

"Oh, it was such a joy to look on *our own* comfortable home; to know what a cheerful fire and plenty of food meant in one's own house! There is something so exhilarating, dear friend, in the thought of *independence*, of reliance on one's own exertions! For a whole year after our removal here, I altogether abandoned my pencil and my pen; I thought I would never labor with them again. But I was mistaken in myself, as I had been many times before. I knew not the wants and necessities of my own nature.

"The second winter, I had continually a restless yearning for higher and nobler pursuits than the mere business of school-teaching. That supplied our human wants and necessities admirably, it is true, but there were longings of my mind that it became as necessary for me to supply. And so, once *more* in the long winter evenings, I resumed my pencils and *my* pen; and I *worked* with them. It is out of my power to express to

you the intense satisfaction that followed these labors ; it seemed as though I had found suddenly an Aladdin's lamp, and that it dispelled the darkness which had encircled a once cherished hope, and showed me a great end that I could accomplish ! I did not immediately force my new productions on the editors, but remembering well that one salutary lesson received long ago, I strove hard to perfect myself. It would be wearisome for you to listen to the narration of my progress till I had gradually won the attention of the noble people of the West ; of how kindly and charitably they hailed my writings—of how encouraging were the letters, which, from many sources, unexpected and unsought, I received ; in those days, I felt as though I were, indeed, working out my destiny. Words crowded to my lips for utterance, thoughts pleaded in my brain to be heard ; I longed to speak encouragement and strength to others, such as I knew well from my own experience, full many an overburdened soul needed. I spoke them, and I *know* they found acceptance and regard in many a heart.

"You will ask if I was then wholly satisfied ; if notoriety pleased me ; if I cared for no other and humbler good when I had attained that ; if, in short, I looked not for other love than that given me by my own kin ? In all calmness and confidence, now, I can answer, yes. There *were* hopes unsatisfied, desires unfulfilled. Admiration was not *all* I craved—commendation not all I coveted. But years passed on, and with them the time when I could most sincerely have rejoiced in loving, and in being loved. The wild dream that haunted my mind, of a perfect happiness on earth, of another kind of affection that I had yet received or given, went by. Coldness, and I am almost constrained to think at times, heartlessness, have usurped the place once occupied by the winged god ; the altar which needed but a word to be enkindled and wrapped in flame, is torn away—a calm, immovable spirit occupies its place. I am neither lonely nor unhappy, only I feel strangely changed—there may be no cloud hovering over me, there is certainly no sunshine : passionless, and without the least craving for human love, my years glide on. I am satisfied with having made the comfort of those for whom I have labored, and yet,

true to woman's belief—to *mine*! I am well aware that I have missed life's highest good; I have passed by, in my eager search for a something that has not satisfied, that bright treasure which the poorest of earth's children, equally with the most exalted, have extended to them by the hand of our beneficent Father.

"Well! am I not strangely confiding with one whom, for ten years, I have not known by thought, or word, or deed? But we were children together, and I am remembering, to-day, how *you*, more than all I left behind me, once knew the thoughts and the hopes I cherished. Doubtless, since we have come to be women, both of us have much changed, but at this hour, I will believe you sympathise with me, as in the days of old.

"Not long ago, there came to me the word of one, a man gifted with noble intellectual faculties, and rich in heart-wealth: he has wished me to be his wife; but knowing what a very pauper I am in all that is best calculated to make his a happy home—you will understand I am not speaking of fortune or of beauty *now*—I have declined his suit. I cannot regard him as I could have a few, *but* a few short years ago. I do not love him as my imagination tells me woman *can* and *should* love. For a moment, when I read his words, my heart beat wildly—I was happy, but that passed, how quickly! I distrust myself—I do not wish now that any one should intrust to me a charge of happiness through life; it would be madness, no less than foul wrong, indeed, in *me* to wed with one whose affections I could make such a paltry return. I shall never marry.

"And, now, believing that I have outwearied you, and feeling that you will *gladly* let the remainder of your interrogatories, to-day, pass unanswered, I will conclude, with the earnest hope that *you* may never be tempted to barter the sacred affections of your heart, for any more alluring, but less, oh, believe me, *far* less satisfying prize. In the name of our childhood,

"Always yours,

"LILY REEVE."

Dear reader, it may be proper to state, that in spite of this emphatic disclaimer on her part, a western paper I have recently received, contains a notice of the marriage of the distinguished

poetess, Lily Reeve, with the Hon. ———. Had it not been for this one other proof of what is called the fickleness of woman's nature, you perceive I should have been enabled to end my story without the record of a wedding; but you will bear in mind that this repetition of the almost invariable climax, is not *my* fault!

CALLORE.

A LADY sat and read :

“ Whatever judgment after-thought may pass on my confession, I know that when you read these pages your heart will be with me, and that it will not, in any moment of perusal, really and harshly condemn. If it does, throw the letter at once aside, and give all thought of me to the winds : for if I cannot stand reproachless before the tribunal of your affections, I could *wish* to be nothing to you henceforth.

“ You call me to account—you ask an explanation of my past—for you have to decide between me and my accusers, those accusers being your nearest friends : you do right in asking this much, and I will answer as plainly—without attempting the palliation of any circumstance of my life that it may be necessary for you to know.

“ If you were with me to-night, Marien, you would not wonder that I set about this sad work with a calmness that might prove to another than you an entire ignorance, on my part, of the issues that will attend it, or result from it. The unutterable beauty of the heaven and earth, as they are glorified now in the clearest and most solemn moonlight, have brought a Thought to me, and a Spirit is near—and I do not tremble when I know that she sees that thought.

“ Fifteen years ago I loved as the young love, passionately, yet not ignorantly. Callore was but a child when she was sent to my father to be educated by him. I have never since seen a creature so beautiful as she : young as she was, there

was an angelic grace in all she said or did, that won sincerest admiration and affection from those with whom she lived. Knowing, as I did, that this grace was the human utterance of her spirit-beauty, seeing in her, as I did, the gentlest and loveliest of all God's creation, is it a wonder that I learned in our intercourse, boy though I was, to almost adore her? And it was no childish passion—but a genuine love, strong and enduring, the richest offering of my heart for her. I told Callore of this before she went away from us. I was just entering on the study of my profession then, and a consciousness, prophetic, of ultimate independence, gave strength and force to my words—but such weight they did not need. When I left my happiness to the decision of that young girl, I knew I was not deferring to the fancy of a child—her answer would be that of a true woman. Callore's heart had awakened—it was all as I hoped—it was *my* first, but for you, Marien, my only love—I am proud to declare it!

“During the twelvemonth that followed, I visited my betrothed but once. Her home was at a long distance from the village where I lived; the journey thitherward was neither dangerous nor tedious, but one that with my small means could not often be afforded. I found Callore's parents in miserable circumstances—in the past months her father had met with repeated losses—his business was closed—he was beggared. They welcomed me with hearty joy to their fire-side—they promised that she should be mine as soon as I was prepared to provide for our support. The blessed impressions of that visit lasted me long; in after days its very remembrance caused me anguish almost insupportable.

“When I set out on my homeward journey, the grief of parting was annulled by the ambitious fancies that filled my brain—by the brave and new determinations I took with me from her presence. Some verses of mine which had been recently printed, were so fortunate as to meet with attention, they elicited the approbation of critics. The unhopèd-for success had encouraged me to continue these efforts quite frequently, and a stray thought of fame and fortune now and then dazzled my brain. When I parted with Callore, I resolved to make more decided

efforts in this way—if they proved successful I would then use my pen as a means of support—would abandon the design of living by my distasteful profession. My friend herself had encouraged the plan. Unaware of my authorship, she had read my verses, had spoken to me of them, and repeated sentences of them with an enthusiastic admiration that transported me with joy. It was owing chiefly to her instant and proud appreciation that I began first to think really seriously of authorship.

“In a few months—to me they went winged with light and promise—I had published a volume of my poems. I was never in my life so happy as when I sent a copy of that work, in manuscript, to her. I thought how she would read the pages—how she would linger fondly over those songs which were addressed to her, by words which had a latent meaning, that would meet her eye alone; how her tears would fall as she closed my work and thought of what a true dedication it was to her! how she would live, one day at least, in the pages, and in *that* day have no thought but of me!

“While I listened to the congratulation of others, I impatiently waited for her acknowledgment: the reward for which I most longed was her praise—one sweet word of approval from her lips was worth all else, more grateful than the encouraging words of critics, than my mother’s kiss, than my father’s honestly expressed satisfaction. You understand how natural this all was, Marien! You who know how divine a thing is love—you who know how much more precious is the praise springing from the warm, loving, and beloved heart, than that awarded by the clearest intellect.

“I had my reward—my impatient spirit was put at rest full soon. A letter came—but *she* did not write it: her approbation was expressed, but in the words of another. They had wronged and deceived me—they had married Callore! Yes—to a man who could afford to re-establish her father’s fallen fortunes, to maintain her in splendor! The blow stunned me: by reason of its very heaviness, I could not at first understand, or conceive, or *realize* it all. I lived as one in a terrific dream, when some undefined horror takes possession of the soul, from which he awakens with an involuntary ‘thank God!’ I was in a state of

frenzy, which, while it admitted the performance of all my usual duties, left me bewildered only to myself. I had no need to question, to disbelieve : positive knowledge left me nothing to hope for—all was before me, from the nothingness that remained after bereavement, to the fame, the glittering, but worthless fame that was within my grasping. That was a bereavement indeed, one of which I could not in those days, nor ever, until now, speak to another. I could not bring myself to so profane Callore, I could not endure that others should associate her name even with unworthy thoughts. I *knew* that she was tried beyond me—that the wrong inflicted on her was greater than on me.

“Was not this a thought insupportable? that she had been *sacrificed*—that she had been sold? It was too much.

“The only prayer I offered in those days was that she might find consolation, that she at least might be at peace—it was the only desire of my heart. As time passed on and the pressure of the blow was removed, I began to slowly recover from its stunning power—then my sole wish was to look on Callore once more, and learn so from her own lips, what I felt she alone could tell. I had now abandoned my profession: the pride of intellect took full possession of me; for poverty or for riches I cared not at all, I was only determined on becoming a master-mind of the age. Even before aware of my irreparable loss, ambition had begun to greatly strengthen within me—that, as well as love, became a motive and an incentive. The one was a vanity, the other a delusion: what a madman did the two impulses make of me when I knew that Callore was lost to me!

“Three years passed away—then I went to the capital. The determination I had once made of immediately seeking Callore had never been acted on: I had not even once heard of her since that announcement of her marriage was received. But my other resolve was in the meantime carried out. I had established myself among the men of letters.

“It was with much pride that I accepted an invitation extended me to lecture in the city where the mighty men of the nation were gathered, and I resolved, before I went to —, that from the position I should there occupy, I would speak to

those helmsmen truths which were not often uttered in their hearing. My plan was thwarted, the very day after my arrival in the city I was confined to my room, to my bed, sick and delirious. From that long and dangerous illness I recovered at last, feeble in strength, and doubly wretched; my sickness had been one continued and distressful vision—the sorrows of all the past had fallen upon me anew—I lived them over, I bore them afresh—they were more grievous than at the first, they had lost the novelty, had settled into a dreary consciousness of reality.

“I intended to go quietly from the city as soon as my strength was sufficiently recovered, having entirely given up the idea of lecturing. The day previous to that which I had fixed upon for my departure, a friend, who had devoted himself to me during the weeks of my sickness, was with me, persuading me to appear that evening as his guest—the close of the session was drawing near, and he had made preparations in his beautiful home for the great ball of the season; I pleaded every imaginable reason for declining, but he would not admit one, and so I was compelled to comply.

“I was there—and it almost seemed as though that night had been ordained as a triumph-night to me. I say it without vanity, without a wish to impress you, but merely as a simple fact: the unavoidable breaking of my public engagement, my severe sickness, and narrow escape from death, with prior reasons, made me an object of the peculiar and most kind attentions of lovely women and noble men. It was after midnight, and I was about retiring, at a time when the great proportion of the guests were engaged in the dance: just then my host approached me, accompanied by a lady and gentleman, who had requested an introduction. . . . Shall I go on! That lady was Callore, *my Callore!* and the old man, was it not enough to make one weep, that old man, older far than her own father, was her husband! I could not control my amazement when I gazed upon her face, as the name was announced—my eyes were riveted on hers when I clasped her hands—my voice—it was in her heart when I spoke. We met, but for this recognition, as strangers—not a word that betrayed our communion of the past

was spoken as we conversed together, but there was a language that had meaning which none but us could know. Alas! that it was not a dead language to us. Callore looked much older than she really was, but beside him, how youthful! and how marvellously beautiful she was! Her sorrow had chosen for itself an expression which none in the wide world save myself could understand—if she had wept much, her eyes had not dimmed with the tears; they were full of an expression I had never seen in them before—but we had never met as now, before—it told me, and that paleness of her cheek told me, as her eyes fixed on me, on *him*, and on the gems that adorned her person, on the magnificent robe she wore, the story of her bondage, of her slavery, and in the bitterness of my spirit I could have cursed them who had so wronged her and me!

“Callore had gone much into the world since her marriage-day; I could read that in her manner, in the mingling of exquisite grace and womanly dignity, in her entire self-possession during that oasis-moment of our interview. The man, her husband, her *owner*, once expressed a few words relating to the poet before him, meant for compliment—she never strove to echo their sentiment, but, as while he spoke my eyes sought hers, I saw her ineffectual efforts to appear calm and indifferent—she mastered her emotion in a moment, and then was passing away with a gentle inclination of the head at parting. It was all.

“I stood spell-bound, watching her as she went—and I felt well assured that as much of anguish had pierced her heart in that interview as was dwelling then in mine. The miserable past was our present again, and the future, shorn of all glories, was as dark, as hopeless, as our blighted youth had been. I did not after this venture to write to Callore—I sent no message—that undefined thought which was not really hope, but merely expectation, that thought which had kept me free from any engagement of a similar nature with other women—that thought which I knew had soothed her while she wore her heavy, gilded chain, was dead to each of us. I say *us*, for I felt and knew it even then, that as it had been with me, so was it with her. We had been in our early youth as twins with one heart,

we could read each other through, even in a moment of casual meeting—though we might be enigmas to the world, it was not possible that we should be such to each other. Though not a word of our past had been spoken in that interview, it was all intelligible for both of us—our years of separation were unsealed with the first look interchanged.

“We did not, after this, meet again. I went immediately from the city to my own home; I could not risk the trial of seeing her even once more. I felt that would be a trial more than I could bear. With somewhat of courage, after this, I resumed my labors; my ambition had received a new spur—my work should prove a consolation to her as well as to me—I would immortalize our hopeless love. In this labor I was interrupted; I received a letter, the first and the last, from Rufus Calcraft’s wife. I enclose it. Marien, if you would have yet other proofs that *you* are now all in all to me—how shall I present it? *Could* I offer proof more conclusive than in laying before you the secret which a broken heart whispered to me?

“‘Were it not that sentence of speedy death is passed upon me, I would not dare to write you; I would not do so even in this extremity, could I otherwise depart in peace—in *peace*, *Walter!* What a sound have those words for me—do I err in saying for *us*? They are like the gush of living waters, and the shade of palm-trees in a desert. That the best happiness of our life has been wrecked, that we have lived for years as once we had not believed we could live for a day, is it not idle in me, a dying woman, to declare it? That night when we met at last, when *he* spoke the flattery which must have been hateful to you, I closed my lips—I *would* have flung myself abjectly before you, but that I had suffered as you had, but that I had been wronged as you. I could not bring myself to say what all the world had said, and so I was silent when my heart was fullest; by right I should have stood beside you, *your own*; and while the world uttered its praises, it would then have been mine to whisper of love. Remember—(I should not bid you remember, you, who I know have never forgotten)—think of the days when we were one; think what it must have cost me to have fettered my lips that night; think how I must have

schooled myself to have been able to go, and that calmly, from you, knowing that it was forever, Walter !

“There is one book that I have studied more devoutly in the past than even that priceless volume which has bidden me ‘be patient, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh,’ that book of your inditing, which reached me on my marriage-day ! I laid it in my bosom, I wore it there while my voice was joining in the marriage service, it was there till it had found, every word, a place in my memory—it has been my only treasure, Walter.

“I have been ill since that night when we met ; they have told me to-day that I shall not recover, that I have not long to live, and therefore I write, for before I go, I would leave with you a memorial, a word that shall prove to you it was *not* the love of riches—it was *not* the fear of poverty—it was *not* the pride of wealth—it was *not* want of the fondest devotion for you that bound me to another. I scarcely know how all was brought about, I only know that I listened to the desperate prayer of my father, and married. I am thankful in this hour that I never reproached him for the advantage that was taken of paternal authority ; oh ! my beloved, I needed not to reproach one, who, after that tie was consummated until he died, never forgave himself. I work no injustice—I do no wrong to my husband in writing thus to you. He and I have lived in entire peace together—have been faithful and forbearing toward each other. I believe he will sincerely mourn my loss. But I am not *his* in this hour, Walter ; my duties with him are ended ; it is in justice to myself, as well as to you, that I write a farewell to you. Death may call me away this night ; I do not shrink from the thought that he may find me speaking thus to you. I am conscious that the spirits of the just are round about me ; that the eye of Him who has upheld me in the past weary years in his great mercy, is upon me, and I know it is no sin to write thus to you, and to say, Heaven bless you—when they are the last words I can say to you—I, who should have been *your* Callore.’

“But one wish, one determination resulted from this letter, which I read with the wildest grief ; I must see Callore before

she dies; I must hear from her lips such words as she would have spoken to me in her last hours, had she been mine. I *must* hear her voice once more. And so I went to the town where Calcraft lived. Four days after the 16th, the date of her letter, I stood in the hotel of —, at nightfall, asking my host of Rufus Calcraft's lady. He told me that she was dead—that she died on the 17th, and had been buried that very morning of my arrival!

“Again that sudden, strange calmness, which had once before left my brain clear in a moment of bitterest trial, came over me—it was chilling, like the breeze of autumn. I was free to act and think, and bold to do. I ordered a supper, and partook of it; I rested from my journey, and in an hour, the moon was just rising then, I strolled away to the burial-ground. I had been there before, once, long ago, when I made my first and only visit at her home. Callore went with me to the grave-yard then, and both of us stood long—how well I remember that—before the monument which Calcraft had just then placed at the grave of his wife; and while we stood there, *she* told me the story of the departed woman's life. I was going to Callore's home now; and how can I tell you of my thought as I went? I believe if you had looked into my mind, you would have seen in it settled madness, sober despair—but this lasted only while I walked slowly to the burial-place; when I stood in the grave-yard, and looked upon her freshly-sodded grave that was close beside the tomb of Rufus Calcraft's first wife—is it needful that I should tell you how love and grief quickly mastered that calmness? But my tears at last were checked, my sorrow silenced, my grief was awed before a resolute purpose, and I turned away, determined to fulfil it. Late in the night I passed slowly through the town again. There was the brightest moonlight, like this night's, which called back the fresh memory of it. I went by the majestic house where the widower lived—where Callore had lived, where he was sleeping in his decrepit old age, while she, the young and beautiful, was banished away to a dark and silent house. I was glad my Callore could have no more dreams. I went by the church where we had prayed together long ago, when I, un-

known and poor, was permitted to regard her as my future wife. The gate stood open, but I needed not to enter—I was going to meet my bride at another altar! I passed on deliberately, but directly, till I entered the grave-yard; in the central portion of this ground stood a weeping willow, whose branches trailed upon the ground—in its shadow was Callore's grave. I had brought with me some tools, and I never hesitated a moment after I reached the place, but at once commenced using them—and I remember that I sang while at work, a song which we had once sung together.

"It must have been as much as two hours that I toiled there before I reached her coffin; I worked with the strength and energy of a maniac, and when I had reached the vault—I cannot tell the rest! I have no recollection of it; but this I know, Callore was living! I had roused her from a slumber that had else been death; I had given a home among the living to her whom the old man gave a grave!

"She sat beside me in the shade of that willow, and I remember that I said, 'your husband buried you, your marriage is annulled—it cannot be resumed—you are mine at last, Callore!' and, as persuaded by a perfect and solemn conviction that I spoke the truth, she whispered in reply, 'You have given me life—I give that life to you; for I believe we have a right to unite with one another—it is a providence that you came here.'

"God is my witness, there was no passion in this annulling, this uniting decision; though I knew that the coward heart would shrink from a union so proposed, I felt there was no sin in it; because there was no precedent for such a procedure, was it *therefore* a crime? When she, whose soul was the abode of purity and holiness, could look upon me as she did then, could bless me in the name of our Heavenly Father, and give me her hand in token of submission to my will, do you think that she did it with a consciousness of wrong-doing? Do you believe that I clasped her to my breast, blessing Him whose mercy had restored her to me, with the least of that sense of sin and guilt that would have forbidden my asking His grace to be with us on our future pilgrimage? You, *you*, I know, do not believe it.

—your heart is not so contracted by mingling with the worldly ; you are not so selfish, so cowardly, so weak, as to believe it.

“ I remember that we went away before the morning came, and sought a distant shelter—that afterwards I provided the way and the means for her escape ; I remember how we crossed the ocean, and in another land were *lawfully* married.

“ A portion of this story is what you have heard before ; it is what has expelled me from your presence till I could speak to you of all.

“ Oh, Marien ! I have yet another memory to unseal. I give it to *you*—it is the last I have kept back from the world. You are now my world, and I love you, or would not give it you.

“ I remember a day, the deepest shadow that lies on earth this night looks as full of light, compared with the darkness of that time—a day when Callore was finally laid breathless, speechless, cold, in a grave dark, and deep, and desolate, as that from which I rescued her. Our wedded life was very brief, but it was beautiful—a twelvemonth of joy that ended in overwhelming wo—for then she departed.

“ I came back to my native land. I was greeted among those who loved and honored me once with suspicion ; no proof of what was laid to my charge existed ; but my sudden departure from my native land, and Callore’s vacant grave, awakened suspicion. But it was scarcely defined even in the minds of those who in consequence of it became my bitter enemies. Calcraft was dead, he had cursed me with his dying breath, and I, too, could have cursed the world which had condemned me unheard, if the spirit of my guardian Callore had not been ever near me to save me from the sin.

“ I have revealed to you all the mystery, your gentleness has won it from me, when I had thought no human being ever could unseal my past. And another reason has brought me to sue for your love. I have seen in your features such an image of my loved and lost—I have heard in your voice such an echo of her gentle tones—I have read in your noble, your beautiful spirit, such a response to, nay, such a re-living of the spirit of my Callore, that I am forced to live and love on, when I had only thought to die, or to live and to hate my kind. My youth

has passed forever—my name is a theme for contumely ; I have nothing but my love to offer you who are in the glory of your youth, your beauty, and your innocence. As your own guardian angel shall dictate, answer me.”

It was a night of tempest—a night of rain and thick darkness, that Marien Leonard wrote her answer ; how full was her heart that night of a sorrowing and despairing love. As few women are ever bound was her heart-life in his keeping. His manner, his words, his unhappy fate, that letter, even, had more and more attracted her heart towards him, until she made at last to herself the acknowledgment that was full of terror and dismay—she loved him ! It was very strange, indeed, how this should happen. There was apparently enough of the beautiful and the good about her young and lovely life to attract and win Marien, how was it that the storm, the darkness, should have charmed her instead ?

Yet had she resolved to renounce him—yes, though after this was done, she felt that all would be over with her in this life, and perhaps for ever would be over. And to tell him this she was now forcing the tears back to her heart, calming herself to think cold and cruel words—nerving her soul to bid him an eternal adieu.

Singular was it. Even while Marien sat resolutely thinking on this decision, the very inclination to weep passed ; the bright glow faded from her young cheek, leaving it like marble, the quivering lips pressed together with the courage of an almost fierce will, the moist eyes gazed steadily forward, as though they would *look down* all things, and so she took up the pen she had at first abandoned in despair—and thus she wrote :

“Walter, I am yours. Your ‘confession’ (why make use of a word so humiliating?) is before me. I have read it again and again, and I believe with you, most firmly believe, that the tie which ultimately existed between you and the angel Callore, was justly assumed. I believe that you were *led* to her grave, and not that a mere common human grief sent you there. I believe that after you gave her a resurrection from the grave, she was yours ; that inasmuch as he had buried her, the hus-

band had thenceforth no claim upon her, she *was* dead to him. She was virtually divorced, and in your mutual love you did right to take counsel of each other, and not of the world, for you were the world to her, and she as much to you. I am proud to receive your love—I am grateful to you for it, and that I can return it; I *was* in doubt, in hesitancy—can you believe it? till my hand took up the pen to write, I was about to say, in God's name go, and let us never meet again. I was nerving myself to this when a voice, a conviction as from her in heaven, came to strengthen me in my belief that our marriage is an honorable, and will be a happy one. At the moment that you will, I am your wife."

Alas! at the moment that he willed she *was* a bride—of death!

If her "strength of passion" slew, or the preventing providence of God led her away from earth when the mad poet would have won young Marien, let the reader judge. Only this I know, that in a distant land there are three graves together—Callore and her twinned-spirit Marien, and Walter, sleep there side by side. Around *one* of those names, Fame, with a gentle hand and sorrowful tears, has laid a wreath of glory, and its shade falls lovingly on the memory of the women whom he loved.

When, on that night which should have seen his bridal, he waited for her and she came at last; when he saw her droop, and swoon, and die there at the very altar, they said it was with such perfect calmness as might argue his having foreknown all how it would be, that he bore her in his arms away from the amazed and frightened witnesses.

Again he was on the wide ocean, and another bride, dead Marien, was with him. He rested, he stayed not, till he had laid her in a grave beside his Callore; and ere long the hands of strangers had given him a rest, as I have said, with them; they will rise together at the judgment.

THISTLE-DOWN.

"As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm.

* * * * *

Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know, ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer, and be strong."

LONGFELLOW.

There is no time like these clear September nights, after sunset, for a reverie. If it is a calm evening, and an intense light fills the sky and glorifies it, and you sit where you can see the new moon with the magnificent evening star beneath it, you must be a stupid affair, indeed, if you cannot then dream the most *heavenly* dreams!

But Rosalie Sherwood, poor young creature! is in no dreaming mood this lovely Sabbath night. Her heart is crushed in such an utter helplessness of grief, as leaves no room in it for hope; her brain is too acutely sensitive, just now, for visions. The thistle-down, in beautiful, fairy-like procession, floats on and up before her eyes, and as she watches the frail things, they assume a new interest to her: she feels a human sympathy with them. Like the viewless winds they come, from whence she knows not, and go, whither none can tell. They are homeless, and she is like them, but she is not as they, purposeless.

If you could look into her mind, you would see how she has nerved it to a great determination, how that, mastering visions and hopes once cherished, she has gone forward to a bleak and barren path, and stands there very resolute, yet, in

the first moment of her resolve, miserable; no, she has not yet grown *strong* in the suffering; she cannot *this* night stand up and bear her burden, with a smile of triumph.

Rosalie Sherwood was an only child, the daughter of an humble friend Mrs. Melville had known from her own girlhood. *She*, poor creature, had neither lived nor died a sinner, but once

“As love’s wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman’s heart gave way!—
And the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven,
By man is cursed away.”

On her death-bed Cecily Sherwood gave her unrecognised child to the care of one who promised, in the sincerity of her compassion, to be a mother to the unfortunate infant. And during the eighteen years of that girl’s life, from the hour of her mother’s death to the day when she was left without hope in the world, Rosalie *had* found a parent in the rigid, but always kind and just, Mary Melville.

This widow-lady had one son; he was four years old when her husband died, which was the very year that the little Rosalie was brought to Melville House. The boy’s father had been considered a man of great wealth, but when his affairs were settled, after his decease, it was found that the debts of the estate being paid, little more than a competency remained for the widow. But the lady was fitted, by a life of self-discipline, even in her luxurious home, to calmly meet this emergency. With the remnant of an imagined fortune, she retired to an humbler residence, where, in quiet retirement, she gave her time to managing household affairs, and to superintending the home-education of her children.

Her son, Duncan, and the young Rosalie, had grown up together—until the girl’s twelfth birth-day, constant playmates and pupils in the same school. No one, not even the very busiest busy-body, had ever been able to detect the slightest partiality in Mrs. Melville’s treatment of her children; and, indeed, it had been quite impossible that she should ever regard a child so winningly beautiful as Rosalie, with other than the tenderest affection. Under a light and careless rein, the girl had

been a difficult one to manage, for there was a light like fire in her eyes, that told of strong will and deep passions; and besides, her striking appearance had won sufficient admiration to have completely spoiled her, if a guardian the most vigilant as well as most discerning, had not been ever at hand to speak the right word to, and do the right thing with her.

Mrs. Melville was a thoroughly religious woman, and seriously conscious of the responsibility she incurred in adopting the infant. She could not quiet her conscience with the reflection that she had done a wonderfully good thing in giving Rosalie a home and education: the deep pity she felt for the unfortunate orphan, led her to exercise an uncommon care, that all tendency to evil should be eradicated from the heart of the brilliant girl while she was yet young, that a sense of right, such as should prove abiding, might be impressed on her tender mind. And her labor of love met with a return which might well have made the mother proud.

There had been no officious voice to whisper to Rosalie Sherwood, the story of the doubtful position which she occupied in the world. She was an orphan, the adopted child of the lady whom she devoutly loved with all a daughter's tenderness; this she knew, and it was all she knew; and Mrs. Melville was resolved that she should never know more.

The son of the widow had been educated for the ministry. He was now twenty-two years old, and was soon to be admitted to the priesthood. In this he was following out his own wish, and the most cherished hope of his mother, and it seemed to all who knew him, as though the Head of the church had set His seal upon Duncan from his boyhood. He was so mild and so forbearing, so discreet and generous, so earnest, and so honest,—meek, and holy of heart, was the thought of whosoever looked upon his placid, youthful face. Yet, he had, besides his gentleness, that without which his character might have subsided into a mere peurile weakness,—a firmness of purpose, a reverence for duty, a strict sense of right, equal to that which marked his mother among women. Duncan Melville's abilities were of a high order—perhaps not of the very highest, though if his am-

bition were only equal to his powers, they would surely seem so to the world.

His voice had a sweet, persuasive tone, that was fitted to *win* souls to Christ, yet it could ring like a clarion when the grandeur of his themes fired his own soul. With the warmest hopes and deepest interest, they who knew the difficulties and trials attending the profession he had chosen, looked on this young man.

Duncan and Rosalie had long known the nature of the tie which bound them together, members of one family, and they never called themselves brother and sister after the youth came home a graduate from college. For, from the time when absence empowered him to look as a stranger would look on Rosalie, from that time he saw her elegant, and accomplished, and bewitching, as she was—and other than a fraternal affection was in his heart for her.

And Rosalie, too, loved him—just as Duncan, had he spoken his passion, would have prayed her to love him. She had long ago made him the standard of all manly excellence, and when he came back, after three years of absence, she was not inclined to revoke her early decision; therefore was she prepared to read the language of Duncan's eyes, and she consecrated her heart to him.

During the years which followed his return from college till he was prepared for ordination as a priest, he did not once *speak* to her of his love, which was growing all the while stronger and deeper, as the river-course that, flowing to the ocean, receives every day fresh impetus and force from the many tiny springs that commingle with it. Duncan Melville never *thought* of wedding with another than Rosalie Sherwood.

It was, as I said, near the time appointed for his ordination, when he felt, for the first time, as though he had a *right* to speak openly with her of all his hopes. He asked her, then, what in soul-language he had long before asked, a question which she had as emphatically, in like language, answered—to be his partner for life, in weal or wo.

He had tried to calmly consider Rosalie's character as a chris-

tian minister should consider the character of her whom he would make the sharer of his peculiar lot, and setting every preference aside, Duncan felt that she was fitted to assist, and to bear with him. She was truthful as the day, strong-minded, and generous, humane, and charitable, and though no professor of religion, a woman full of reverence and veneration. He knew that it was only a fear that she should not *adorn* the christian name, that kept her back from the altar of the church, and he loved her for that spirit of humility, knowing that she was "on the Lord's side," and that grace ere long would be given her to proclaim it in doing *all* His commandments.

It was certainly with a joyful and confident heart that, after he had spoken with Rosalie, Duncan sought his mother yesterday, to tell her of the whole of that bright future which opened now before him.

How then was he overcome with amazement and grief, when Mrs. Melville told him it was a union to which she could *never* consent. Then, for the first time in his life, the astonished young man heard of that stain which was on the name poor Rosalie bore. He heard the story to the end—and, with a decision and energy that would have settled the matter with almost any other than his mother, he declared,

"Yet, for all that, I will not give her up."

"It could not be expected that you would fulfil the engagement. Rosalie herself would not allow it, if she knew the truth of the matter."

"But she need not know it; there is no existing necessity. Is it not enough that she is good and precious *to me*? She is a noble woman, whose life has been, thanks to your guidance, beautiful and lofty."

"God knows I *have* striven to do my duty by her; but I know not what I should have done if I had ever thought you would wish to change your relations with her, Duncan."

"The world has not her equal! it is cruel, it is sinful in you, mother, to oppose our union."

"She is a lovely woman; but, my son, there are myriads like her."

"No—*not one!* Tell me you will never breathe a word of what you have told me, *to her!*"

"Never."

"Oh, thank you! thank you! mother, you could not wish another daughter?"

"But for that I have told you, I could not wish another."

"Then I say you must not work this great injustice on us. Rosalie loves me—she has promised to be mine. You will break my heart."

"You are deluded and strongly excited, my son, or you would never speak so to me," said the mother, with that persisting firmness with which the physician resorts to a desperate remedy for a desperate disease. Then she spoke to him of all the relations in life he might yet be called upon to assume—of the misery which very possibly might follow this union in after days. Hours passed on, and the conference was not ended, until, with a crushed heart and trembling voice, Duncan arose abruptly, while his mother yet spoke, and he said :

"If the conclusion to which you have urged me in God's sight, is just, He will give me—He will give Rosalie, too—strength to abide by it. But I can never speak to her of this, and I must find another home than yours and hers. You must speak *for* me, mother, and let me charge you, do it gently. Do not tell her *all*. Let her think what she will—believe, as she must—that I am a wretch past pardon; but do not blight her peace by telling *all*."

"I promise you, Duncan," was the answer, spoken through many tears, and in the deepest sorrow.

An hour after, he was on the way from the village, that he might spend the coming Sabbath in another town.

And, after he was gone, the mother sought her younger, her dearly-loved child. Rosalie heard that familiar step on the stairway—she had seen Duncan hurrying away from the house, and she knew the conference was over; but she had no fear for its result. So she hushed the glad, tumultuous beating of her heart, and tried to veil the brightness of her eyes as she heard

the gentle tapping at her door, that announced the mother coming.

As for Mrs. Melville, *her* heart quite failed her when she went into the pleasant room, and sat down close by Rosalie. In spite of all the strengthening thoughts of duty which she had taken with her as a support in that interview, she was now at a sore loss, for it had been a bitter grief to her kind heart when, of old, for duty's sake, she made her children even a day unhappy. How then could she endure to take away their life's best joy—their richest hope? It was a hard thing—and many moments passed before she could nerve her strong spirit to utter the first word. Rosalie, anxious and impatient too, but unsuspecting, at last exclaimed,

“What can it be that so much troubles you, mother?”

Then Mary Melville spoke, but with a voice so soft and sad, so faint with emotion, that it seemed not all *her* voice; she said,

“I want you to consider that what I say to you, dear child, has given me more pain even to think of, than I have ever felt before. Duncan has told me of your engagement to marry with him. And it has been my duty, my most sorrowful duty, oh, believe me, to tell him that such a tie must never unite you. He can never be your husband—you can never be his wife.”

She paused, exhausted by her emotion—she could not utter another syllable. Rosalie, who had watched her with fixed astonishment as she listened to the words, was the first to speak again, and she tried to say, calmly,

“Of course you have a reason for saying so. It is but just that I should know it.”

“It cannot *be* known. If I had ever in my life deceived you, Rosalie, you might doubt me now, when I assure you that an impediment, which cannot be named, exists to the marriage. Have I not been a mother to you always?” she asked, appealingly, imploringly: “I love you as I love Duncan, and it cuts me to the heart to grieve you.”

“Has Duncan given you an answer?”

“Yes, Rosalie.”

“And it?”

"He has trusted to his mother," she said, almost proudly.

"Rather than me," quickly interrupted Rosalie.

"Rather than do that which is wrong—which might hereafter prove the misery of you both, my child."

"Where is he? Why does he not come himself to tell me this? If the thing is really true, *his* lips should have spoken it, and not another's."

"Oh, Rosalie, he could not do it! I believe his heart is broken. Do not look so upon me. Is it not enough that I bitterly regret, that I shall always deplore having not foreseen the result of your companionship? Say only that you do believe I have striven to do the best for you always, as far as I knew how. I implore you, *say it!*"

"Heaven knows I believe it, mother. When will Duncan come home again?"

"Monday—not before."

When Monday morning came, on the desk in Rosalie's room this letter was found:

"I cannot leave you forever, Duncan,—I cannot go from your protecting care, mother, without saying all that is in my heart. I have no courage to look on you, my brother, again. Mother, our union, which we had thought life-lasting, is broken. I cannot any longer live in the world's sight as your daughter by adoption. I would have done so, I would have remained in any capacity, as a slave, even, for I was bound by gratitude for all that you have done for me, to be with you always,—at least so long as you could wish. If you had unveiled the mystery, and suffered me to stand before you, recognising myself as *you* know me, I would have stayed. I would have been to you, Duncan, only as in childhood, a proud yet humble sister, rejoicing in your triumphs, and sharing, *by sympathy*, in your griefs. I would have put fetters on my heart—the spirit dwelling in me should henceforth have been a stranger to you. I *know* I could have borne to even see another made your wife—but in a mistaken kindness, you put this utterly beyond my power. Too much has been required, and I am found—want-

ing! If even the most miserable fate that can befall an innocent woman, if the curse of illegitimacy were upon me, I could bear that thought even, and acknowledge the justice and wisdom that did not consider me a fit associate for one whose birth is recognised by a parent's pride and fondness.

"But, dear Mrs. Melville, I must be cognizant of the relation, whatever it is, that I bear you. I cannot, I will not, consent to appear nominally your daughter, when you scorn to receive me as such.

"*Mother*—in my dead mother's name I thank you for the generous love you have ever shown me: for the generous care with which you have attended to the development of the talents God gave me. For I am now fitted to labor for myself. I thank you for the watchful guardianship that has made me what I am, a woman self-reliant and strong. I thank you for it, from a heart that has learned only to love and honor you in the past eighteen years. And I call down the blessing of the Infinite God upon you, as I depart. Hereafter, always, it will be my endeavor to live worthily of you—to be *all* that you have, in your more than charity, capacitated me to be. Duncan, you will not forget me—I do not ask it. But pray for me, and live up to the fulness of your being—of your heart and your intellect. There is a happy future for you; I have no word of counsel, no feeble utterance of encouragement to leave you—you will not need such from *me*. God bless and strengthen you in every good word and work—it shall be the constant hope of the sister who *loves* you. Mother, farewell."

This letter was written on the Sabbath eve on which our story opens—written in a perfect passion—yes, of grief, and of despair. The anger that Rosalie may at first have felt, gave way to the wildest sorrow now, but her resolution was taken, and her heart was really strong to bear the resolution out.

After her sudden and most unlooked for disappearance, the mother and son sought long, and I need not say how anxiously, for Rosalie. But their search was vain, and at last, as time passed on, she became to the villagers as one who had never been. But never by the widow was she forgotten, and oh, there was

in the world one heart that sorrowed with a constant sorrow, that hoped with a constant nope for her.

He had lost her, and Duncan sought for no other love among women. When all his searching for Rosalie proved unavailing, the minister applied himself with industry to the work of his calling, and verily he met here with his reward; for as he was a blessing to the people of his parish, in turn they almost adored him. He was a spiritual physician whom God empowered to heal many a wounded, stricken heart; but there was a cross of suffering that he bore himself, which could not be removed. It was his glory that he bore it with martyr-like patience—that he never uttered a reproachful word to her through whom he bore it.

As years passed away, the gifted preacher's impassioned eloquence, and stirring words, bowed many a proud and impenitent soul with another love than that he wished to inspire, still he sought not among any of them companionship, or close friendship. They said at last, considering his life spent in the most rigid performance of duty, that "*he was too high-church to marry*"—that he did not believe such union consonant with the duties of the minister of the cross! But the mother knew better than this—*she* knew a name that was never spoken now in Rosalie's old home, that was dearer than life to the heart of her son, and desolate and lonely as she oft-times was, she never *dared* ask him to give to her a daughter—to take unto himself a wife.

CHAPTER II.

IN a splendid old cathedral a solemn ceremonial was going forward on the morning of a holy festival. A bishop was to be consecrated.

A mighty crowd assembled to witness the ceremony, and the mother of Duncan Melville was there, the happiest soul in all that company, for it was on *her* son that the high honor was to be laid!

How beautiful was the pale, holy countenance of the minister, who, in the early strength of his manhood, was accounted

worthy to fill that great office for which he was about to be set apart! He was a man "acquainted with grief"—you had known it by the resigned, submissive expression of his face; you had known that the passions of mortals had been all subdued in him, by the holy light in his tranquil eyes. Duncan *had* toiled—he *had* borne a burden!

A thousand felt it, looking on the noble front where religion undefiled, and peace, and holy love, and charity, had left for themselves unmistakable evidences: and more than all, one being felt it who had not looked upon that man for years—not since the lines of grief and care had marked the face and form of Duncan Melville. There was reason for the passionate sobs of one heart, crushed anew in that solemn hour; there was pathos such as no other voice could give to the prayers which went up to God from one woman's heart in the great congregation for him. Poor, loving, still-beloved Rosalie! she was there, there, her proud magnificent figure bent humbly from the very commencement to the close of the ceremonial; there, her beautiful eyes filled with tears of love, and grief, and despair, and pride; there, crushed as the humblest flower, that glorious beauty!

And the good man at the altar, for whom the prayers and the praise ascended, thought of her in that hour! Yes, in that very hour he remembered how *one* would have looked on him that day, could she have come, his wife, to witness how his brethren and the people loved and honored him. . . He thought of her, and as he knelt at the altar even then he prayed for her; but not as numbers thought upon the name of Rosalie Sherwood that day: for she also was soon to appear before a throng, and there were a myriad hearts that throbbed with expectancy, and waited impatiently for the hour when they should look upon her.

Bishop Melville had retired at noonday to his study, that he might be for a few moments alone. He was glancing over the sermon he was to deliver that afternoon, when his mother, his proud and happy mother, came quietly into the room, laid a sealed note on the table and instantly withdrew, for she saw how he was occupied.

When he had finished his manuscript, the bishop opened the note and read—could it have been with careless eyes?

“Duncan, I have knelt in the house of the Lord to-day, and witnessed your triumph. Ten years ago, when I went desolate and wretched from your house, I might have prophesied your destiny.

“Come to-night and behold *my* triumph—at—the Opera House!

“Your sister,

“ROSALIE.”

Do you think that as he read that summons he hesitated as to whether he should obey it? If his bishopric had been sacrificed therefor, he would have gone: if disgrace and danger had attended his footsteps, he would have obeyed her bidding! The love which had been strengthening in ten long years of loneliness and bereavement, was not now to stop, to question, or to fear.

“Accompany me, dear mother, this evening. I have made an engagement for you,” he said, as he went, she hanging on his arm, to the cathedral for afternoon service.

“Willingly, my son,” was the instant answer, and Duncan kept her to her word.

But it was with wondering, with surprise that she did not attempt to conceal, and with questions which were satisfied with no definite reply, that Mrs. Melville found herself standing with her son in an obscure corner of the Opera House that night. Soon all her expressions of astonishment were hushed, but by another cause than the mysterious inattention of her son: a queenly woman appeared upon the stage, she lifted her voice, and sobbed the mournful wail which opens the first scene in ———.

For years there had not been such a sensation created among the frequenters of that place, as now, by the appearance of this stranger. The wild, singular style of her beauty, made an impression that was heightened by every movement of her graceful figure, every tone of her rich, melodious voice. She seemed for the time the very embodiment of the sorrow to

which she gave an expression, and the effect was a complete triumph.

Mary Melville and her son gazed on the debutante—they had no word, no look for each other: for they recognised in her voice the tones of a grief of which long ago they heard the prelude—and every note found its echo in the bishop's inmost heart.

"Come away! let us go home! Duncan, this is no place for us—for *you*. It is disgrace to be here," was the mother's passionate plea when at last Rosalie disappeared, and other forms stood in her place.

"We will stay and save her," was the answer, spoken with tears and trembling, by the man for whom, in many a quiet home, prayers in that very hour ascended. "She is mine *now*, and no earthly consideration or power shall divide us."

And looking for a moment in her son's face steadfastly, the lady turned away sighing and tearful, for she knew that she must yield then, and she had fears for the future.

A half-hour passed and the star of the night re-appeared, resplendent in beauty, triumphing in hope;—again her marvellous voice was raised, not with the wail of sorrow, not with the bitter cry of despair that was hopeless, but glad and gay, angelic in its joy.

Again the mother's eyes were turned on him beside her—and a light was on that pale forehead—a smile on that calm face—a gladness in those eyes, such as she had not seen there in long, long years: but though she looked with a mother's love upon the one who stood the admiration of all eyes, crowned with the glory-crown of perfection in her art, she could not with Duncan, hope. For alas! her woman-heart knew too well the ordeal through which the daughter of her care and love must have passed before she came into *that* presence where she stood now, who could tell if still the mistress of herself and her destiny? who could tell if pure and undefiled?

That night and the following day, there were many who sought admittance to the parlors of Rosalie Sherwood—they would lay the homage of their trifling hearts at her feet. But all these sought in vain; and why was this? Because such admiring

tribute was not what the noble woman sought—and because, ere she had risen in the morning, a letter, written in the solitude of night, was handed her, which barred and bolted her doors against the curious world.

“Rosalie! Rosalie! look back through the ten years that are gone; I am answering your letter of long ago with words—I have a thousand times answered them with my heart, till the thoughts which have crowded there, filled it almost to breaking. We have met—met at last—you and I! But did you call that a triumph when you stood in God’s house, and saw them lay their consecrating hands upon me? Heaven forgive me, I was thinking of *you* then—and thinking, too, that if this honor was in any way to be considered a *reward*, the needful part was wanting—you were not there! Yet you *were* there, you have written me—ah, but not *Rosalie, my wife*, the woman I loved better than *all* on earth—the *acknowledged* woman, her whose memory I had borne about with me till it was a needful part of my existence. You were by when the people came to see me consecrated—and I obeyed your call, I saw *you* when the people anointed you with the tears of their admiration and praise. If you read my heart at all, to-day, you *knew* how I had suffered—you *saw* that I had grown old in the sorrow. Was I mistaken to-night in the thought that you, too, had not been unmindful of *our* past—that you were not satisfied with the popular applause—that you, also, have been lonely, that you have wept—that you have trodden in the path of duty with weariness?

“There is but one barrier now in the wide world that shall interpose between us—Rosalie, it is your own will. If I was ever anything to you, I beseech you think calmly before you answer, and do not let your triumph, to-night, blind you to the fact which you once recognised, which can make us happy *yet*. I trust you, as in our younger days: nothing, nothing but your own words could convince me that you are not worthy to take the highest place among the ladies of this land. Oh, let the remembrance that I have been faithful to you through all the past, plead for me, if your pride should rise up to condemn me. Let me come and plead *with* you, for I know not what I write.”

The answer returned to this letter was as follows :

"I learned, long ago, the bar that prevented our union—it is in existence still, Duncan. Your mother only shall decide if it be insurmountable. I have never, even for a moment, doubted your faithfulness—and it has been to me an unspeakable comfort in the days when I was alone, and toiling for a support, to *know* that none had supplanted me in your affections. In the temptations, and struggles, and hardships I have known, it has kept me above and beyond the world, and if the last night's triumph proves to be but the opening of a new life for me on earth, the recollection of what you are, and that you care for me, will prove a rock of defence, and a stronghold of hope always. Severed from, or united with you, I am yours forever."

Seven days after, there was a marriage in the little church of that remote village, where Duncan Melville and Rosalie Sherwood passed their childhood. Side by side they stood now, once again, where the baptismal service had long since been read for them, and the mother of the bishop gave the bride away!

"*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*"

WHAT KATY DID.

Oh, tell me where did Katy live,
And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
And yet so wicked, too?—HOLMES.

I WAS passing through a grove of budding maple trees, and a certain set of listeners with whom I had engaged to talk, were in my eye—and I was in a wondering, a desperate mood! what *could* I find to say that they would care to hear? All at once my gloomy meditations were disturbed by the voice of a creature, which came from the heights above, chirping out—not softly, not musically, but in a shrieking tone, as though bent on vociferous disputation with somebody—“Katy *did*.” The spirit of opposition roused within me as I heard that cry; I was about to deny the assertion, point blank, when the sweet, tiny voice of another insect answered, distinctly, “She didn’t.” It was like the acceptance of a challenge in effect. Forthwith the first named speaker began again, with increased energy, “Katy did! Katy did! she did! she did! she did!” But still the milder voice, quite undismayed, replied, valiantly, and with a solemn air of undoubtable truth, “She didn’t!”

The neighboring spirits were now all aroused; never did mortal hear before such a rush of sound as burst upon me then! A perfect flood of abuse gushed from one throat, while distinct and dignified denial met it all in reply. Asseverations numberless, and uncharitable defamation of one powerless now to vindicate herself, followed. Here is the substance of that wondrous confabulation.

Little Kitty Clover was the only child of her widowed father

“A fine old English gentleman, all of the olden time.”

She was a blooming fairy of a girl, spoiled of course, and worshipped, too—a very “household goddess.” Miserably educated had the young thing been; for, only think of it! at sixteen years of age, she was as wild and free in spirit as a chamois, as brave as a chamois hunter, and through the unpardonable neglect of those who had the care of her, she had been taught nothing whatever of sorrow, save the dictionary definition, and *that* she could scarcely comprehend. At this age she was still under the care, or rather in the companionship of a governess, Lucy Freer, a lady also young; indeed but two years older than her pupil; but *she* was a dignified, commanding personage, (and thus differed very much from Kitty;) a silent, sad, remarkably handsome girl, who sometimes wept and never laughed, (which was strange, for one would have thought that the spirit of mirth dwelling in Kitty, was of an absolutely infectious nature;) but Lucy had the sweetest of smiles when she was pleased or happy; and that smile, with her unvarying goodness and talent, secured the warm love of her pupil.

As we have intimated, Kitty's father had done all that he possibly could to spoil his daughter; and the labor in that way, it must be confessed, had been far from vain. But, fortunately, nature had given the girl a warm, affectionate heart, and the training of her childhood had not tended to make her half so selfish and exacting as, in all reason, might have been expected. She was innately frank and noble; and there was a clear expression of her blue eyes, which told how honest and sincere she was in all her thoughts and doings.

Retired and unsuperficial as had been her way of life, poor Kitty! she found occasion to fall “desperately in love!”

Not long after the governess made her home at Woodland cottage, in C——, a gentleman from London came to call upon her. The pupil happened to be present at the interview, and she heard the stranger announce his intention of making his home in the village, and the great evident satisfaction of Lucy Freer, as *she* heard this determination, did not escape the ob-

servation of the keen-eyed Kitty ; and having little else to think about, for several days, she indulged in an idle wonderment as to what kind of regard her governess could cherish for the handsome man, that she should be so *very* light of heart, so really joyous, from the very moment of his appearing.

Eugene Lind, that was his name, was about thirty years of age, as fine-looking, stately, and elegant a person, as need be : he was a lawyer by profession, but still more of a poet by choice. As the only acquaintance he had in C——, was housed at Woodland, he became at once a frequent guest at the cottage, where he found always a genial host in Reginald Clover ; but the truth must be said, that though the old man's welcome was certainly desirable, it was not him that the lawyer really went, or cared, to see. This became quite evident, when, ere long, in view of his old friendship for Lucy, he made bold to push his way directly to the school-room, when his visits were made in the day time, which was oftentimes the case.

It was no marvellous wonder that Kitty Clover, secluded as she was from the rest of the world save that minute portion of it that dwelt in, and just about her own home, it was no wonder, I say, that in the course of time she should have begun to think quite as much of Mr. Lind as she did of her grammar and mathematics ; that she should even prefer at last, and *greatly* prefer, listening to his fine readings and conversation, to any other amusement. But she did no more than listen, that is, for a year, till she was sixteen, and then Kitty had become so accustomed to his presence, and so cognizant of her own powers of speech, as to find it really possible to talk with, and to learn of him ; and he was a better teacher than Lucy even, for he imparted a high charm to every book he laid his hands on—it became “tabooed” instantly to the child's apprehension.

Ah ! no longer did she sit then, a shy and silent creature in the great bow-window, pretending to total abstraction from all things past, present, or future, save what she found in the dry pages of her book ; but boldly, at least calmly, came she forward to sit beside her governess—to meet the glances of the poet-lawyer—to listen and to speak with him and Lucy, as a sane and intelligent being.

And so it was, that day by day, and more and still more thoroughly she learned to love him; so it was that his words fell one by one with creative power on her heart, till the most radiant and glorious flower, sprung up there; but though its fragrance filled her life with a beauty which she *felt*, she could not comprehend it, did not at all understand it, till at last she passed from wondering to knowledge, as she awakened to see how very pale the governess was growing—how languidly she carried forward the work of instruction—how abstractedly she went about all her tasks—how she neglected totally the volumes which had once been her loved companions—how she oftentimes wept—how dull and dispirited she was when Eugene Lind was not by, and how she invariably, for a moment at least, brightened up and smiled when he drew near.

And when poor Kitty's eyes *were* opened, lovely reader, they seemed good for nothing in the world but weeping, just a vent for tears; for then she knew, she could not *help* knowing, that Lucy Freer loved the lawyer. And it *was* a terrible discovery to make, was it not? For now the child, what right had she to think of him? She did not wonder for a moment whether or no the love of the governess was well-founded, whether or no he returned it; she could only say to herself, "he has visited her constantly, has exerted himself to be agreeable, and it's all his own fault and doing; he has no right, and is too old to trifle so. Lucy is an orphan, and poor; she is beautiful, and good enough—yes, even for him! *I* have a father, and am rich; he ought to love her, and he shall tell her that he *does*."

And so little Kate, (recollect, my world-fashioned lady, all this happened a long time ago, and Kitty had learned her knowledge of life's obligations only from wild romance,) felt that a duty devolved on her which must be performed; and oh, how strenuously she labored, how dispassionately she reasoned with herself, that she might become strong to fulfil it!

Eugene had not visited the cottage in many days; a Friday night came round, and for two whole weeks he had absented himself. On this day, as by mutual consent, the books were laid aside, the school-room deserted, Lucy retired to her own room, ill, certainly at heart, and Kitty, silent and troubled, yet

stronger to bear her burden of sorrow because she felt that another suffered more than she, walked, practiced her music, arranged flowers with the utmost determination; and then, restless, but not knowing what to do with herself, she wandered about the house, quite as if in a dream, yet cautious as a somnambulist, for how carefully she shunned the presence and inquiring glances of her good old father. She *was* dreaming—such a dream, indeed, as adds years to the “inner life” of the young—dreaming of bereavement, self-sacrifice, and death! even she, that bright young girl!

But at last, with an assured purpose Kitty seated herself to write a letter. A difficult work it was to pen it, good and loving soul, *thou* wilt not doubt it. No attempt at disguise was made in the writing, yet she left the letter without signature, thinking to herself, he will understand how it all is; he will, if there is any honor in him, explain, at least he will feel that there is one here who watches him.

“MR. LIND,—Because you seem blind, and deaf, and dumb, to all that you should, as a man of honor, be proud to see and know, I deem myself excusable in reminding you of what you owe to one who has received your frequent visits as a brother, *as more*. I have no feeling of false delicacy in thus appealing to you. A sense of right you must have. You will feel that I am only true to myself, to *my* sense of right in so doing. Halting thus, when you have gone so far, you do that which no *gentleman should* do. I cannot yet believe that you have sought the presence of one who loves you well, if not wisely, merely because it afforded you a momentary pleasure. Let me remind you that the future peace of a human being depends on the course you pursue.”

This heroic epistle was of course written, destroyed, and rewritten, many times, before Kitty became fully satisfied that it was to her purpose. That very night it was dispatched to the post, with no feeling of false delicacy, as she said, but, with a very little trepidation. Dear child, she must certainly have been laboring under a species of moral insanity, must she not?

The next day, Saturday, happened to be consecrated to the memory of St. Valentine, February the fourteenth. Much relieved in mind, Kitty sate on this All Fool's day with the governess in her boudoir, a very charming place by the way, where beauty lived with the heiress. They were listlessly looking over the love-declarations which filled the silver waiter before them; and it was evident that the passionate confessions on which they gazed produced little effect, save a vague momentary curiosity, in the mind of either. One of them in her young heart had renounced all loves—and as for the other —.

But at last, Lucy looked upon her pupil with a flushed, smiling face, exclaiming, "Here is a missive for *you*, from Eugene. You know this writing, isn't it his? It will be worth reading."

"Hum!" was the doubtful, brief reply—and Kitty held her hand out quite carelessly for the valentine, though try as she might, she could not conceal the sudden flashing of her eyes, and her hand, I believe, trembled a little. She took the note and read, to *herself*—

I, who love you very truly
Dare to tell you so to-day;
Sweetest maiden, though love-laden
Bolder souls beset your way,
Do you hear?

While the earnest, eager voices
Vow their passion, and their truth,
I, too, bend in adoration
Of the splendor of your youth—
Do you care?

And because your lightest whisper
Chains my spirit as a spell,
Oh, because your smile is dearer
To my heart than I can tell,
Will you love me?

In my memory I have throned you,
Thinking of you every hour;
Dear young Kitty, I adore you,
Ah, forget your tyrant power—
Try to love me!

E. L.

A sudden smile, brilliant in its gladness, passed over the maiden's face as she read, but then remembering somewhat, she arose, and hastily flung the perfumed note within the grate, saying,

"The impudence of those village boys is unpardonable; neither of us know them much more than by sight, and they have no right to presume so far!"

But though she spoke so pettishly, Kitty's smile, as she read the quoted love-lay, had not escaped Lucy's notice, and she said quietly in reply,

"My dear, Eugene Lind is not *a boy*, and I don't think his writing to you *this* day a piece of impertinence, either."

At night-fall when Kitty sate alone, another epistle was laid before her, which she read from beginning to end in such a state of bewilderment as may be "imagined, but not described."

"DEAR FRIEND,—I have this morning received a letter, singular rather in its bearings, (at least to the fashion-moulded automaton it might seem so,) to me it is too blessed to appear anything *but* blessed. A letter written in such a style of undisguised earnestness and truth, that, though it is Valentine day, I cannot doubt (perhaps *you* will say it is because I *will* not) either the writer's name, or the purport of her words;—a declaration of love! And to me it is unspeakably dearer than anything else in the wide world could be. It is only because I felt sensible every day of an increasing interest in her, that I have stayed so long away—it seems an age to me—from Woodland Cottage. Now, if it be indeed *true*, that I have gained the affection of your glorious charge, am I not blest? Of such a 'consummation, devoutly to be wished,' I have dreamed, but never dared really to hope. To-morrow I shall come to you, Lucy, and you must counsel me. The letter enclosed has just reached me, accompanying one for myself from Richmond. Joy to you! for now you can 'give care to the winds' once more—a bright day is dawning, I clearly foresee it.

"Adieu,—Yours ever,

"EUGENE LIND."

Was there ever, was there *ever* such a mishap?

Surely never did astonished, troubled mortal wish more fervently for instant annihilation, than did poor Kitty Clover as she read this letter, discovering at its conclusion that it had been addressed by mistake to *her*! With what frantic haste did she commit it to the flames—how furiously the bell-rope swung in her hand—how passionately she dispatched the servant who answered her call, with the letter which had come enclosed to Lucy. And then, the windy tempest having passed, how wildly did she weep, as she barred herself from human sight that she might agonize alone over the effect of her most stupid interference! Dead within her was all curiosity; she cared not who the stranger Richmond was; she cared not for the conviction that Eugene Lind was at that moment rejoicing in the thought of having won her love; the natural misconception he had been so glad to put upon her words, took in her mind nothing like the shape of a “comedy of errors”—it was something intolerably worse.

For hours she wept wildly, and without ceasing; but the fountain of tears was at last exhausted, and near midnight, having become calm again—the calmness of desperation it was, doubtless—and thinking of everything but sleep, Kitty ventured into the presence of her governess. Neither had Lucy yet retired; but there she sate, poring over her letter, and looking more beautiful and happy than she had in many weeks.

Kitty seated herself at Lucy's feet, and said, quite regardless of her friend's astonishment at the ghost-like appearance she made,—

“Is there anybody you love?”

“Why, if there were not, I should die.”

“*Whom* do love?”

“You, dear Kitty.”

“But is there anybody you shall *marry*? Do you like any person well enough for that?”

“I truly hope it. 'Twould be forlorn to think otherwise.”

“Now, in Heaven's name, don't trifle! Tell me something about yourself—about your past life. If you do not, Lucy, I shall go mad at once.”

Lucy seemed lost in wonder, or in retrospection, as Kitty spoke thus. She did not answer, and the impatient child, unable to bear the silence and suspense, threw herself on her knees, and looked up imploringly, with clasped hands, on the governess; finally she said, "Lucy Freer, tell me, *do* you love Eugene? What has made you so sad and pale lately?"

"Do I love *him*? Yes! heartily; he has been so kind to me," was the now immediate and energetic reply. "Would you hear of my past, dear Kitty? It is a dreary story."

But it was now the young girl who was silent. With her head bent to her knees, she sat at the feet of the governess; perhaps Lucy comprehended her thoughts by intuition, but at all events she did not wait long for a reply.

"I am a married woman already," she said.

And now was Kitty all life and fire; up she sprung, exclaiming—

"Is *he*, then, your husband?"

"No, far from it," was the answer, which rolled back a cloud that threatened a more than Hades' gloom in the soul of the pupil.

"I will tell you all, dear child; indeed I will, for I *can now*; sit down." She was obeyed. "To-night, Eugene Lind, God bless him! has sent me a letter, the first received in months from my husband, Richmond Freer. Come nearer, Kitty, look up, I am sad no longer, even though I tell you he is exiled, he can never come back to old England again. But I am going to him. I am going very soon." Even at this unexpected announcement the listener would not lift her head. "When I was at school in London, I wrote occasionally for a paper which Richmond edited; and by so doing I was able to help my poor, dear mother very much, and she was indeed in need of help. After a while I became personally acquainted with the editor, and when he was at last arrested for publishing what was called an incendiary, a too patriotic paper for these slavish times, you may be sure I did not forget to feel for him. After his trial was over, and the sentence of banishment was passed on him, we met again, for we loved each other, Kitty, and misfortune only made him dearer to me. The very night of his departure from

England, his cousin, Eugene Lind, married us, and my poor mother was present at the ceremony; she would not oppose the union, wild as it doubtless seemed to her, because she knew that we were not fickle in our love, and felt that a bright time might come at last even for us. Shortly after Richmond's departure, she died. I was left alone. When I had finished the course of studies and graduated, owing to Eugene's efforts, this situation of governess, in your house, was secured to me. May Heaven bless and make all your life happy, Kate, for you have been kind to me; and you are very dear to me. For a long time Richmond lived on the continent, but he did not prosper there—he has been very unfortunate, poor fellow! Now that he has gone to the New World, a pilgrim shorn of all things but my love, do you not see I must go to him? He calls me—I must go. What a glorious word is that *must*! Kitty, you will not ask me again if I love Eugene Lind, or I shall launch out into such praises of him as will astonish you."

Thinking now but one thing, that Lucy *had* in some unaccountable way discovered her secret, Kitty sprung from her humble posture—she could not speak one word—but with a kiss, she left the governess alone.

And oh, what a miserable little puss was she that live-long night. It was now all clear; she, the proud, lofty-hearted, impulsive Kate, stood in the eyes of another as having demanded his love—a beggar imploring his hand in payment for the heart she had given him unasked! Hu! what blackness of darkness was that which enveloped her now, body and soul, as she sat through the night-hours pondering, with burning brain, on her delusion. How hateful, how intrusive seemed the sunlight which at last streamed in upon her! How would he ever believe, how could he ever be told the ridiculous truth of the matter? For the very tenor of that philanthropic letter she had written, made it impossible for her to find, or even *seek*, a confidant in Lucy.

There was but one thought that could at all console the mourner; perhaps Eugene Lind would seek her hand some day, relying on the truth of what he imagined to be *her* declaration, and then how disdainfully she would spurn him—yes! if she

died in the struggle, she would renounce him! Dear spirit of human pride, what a mighty thing thou art!

True to his expressed intention, Eugene visited Woodland cottage that day, and every day, until the departure of the governess: but Lucy and Mr. Clover alone received him. It was said in the house that Kitty, in her grief at parting with "*Miss Freer*," had wept herself sick; and, for some cause or other, it was very evident that the young girl was transformed into a "weeping maiden."

But to Lucy's mind, it was all very clear; she had read Kitty's heroic appeal to Eugene, and could not doubt that it had been made on her account. There was no occasion for seeking her pupil's confidence, and when her cousin, in his trouble, revealed to her all his doubt and grief, though she made no explanation, she felt warranted in reassuring him, by promising him an ultimate victory, if not an easy one.

It was a relief to Kitty Clover, when she was left alone in the cottage—*alone*, for her father accompanied Lucy and Mr. Lind to the sea-side. The sorrow at parting with her friend was soon overcome, the tears wiped away, and she breathed freely once more.

When Eugene returned from Liverpool, as Lucy had counselled him, he wrote to Kate a frank and manly letter, which ended with these words:

"You have my life in your hands, to make it glad or miserable. I love you, and can be happy only if you return my love. May I come to you, and will you welcome me? Oh, remember, I pray you, how much depends on your reply, and be merciful!"

And the answer was only, "I do not love—I cannot receive you." With a smile of triumph, this was written; and though a more thoroughly false declaration never issued from the *will* of a proud woman, still, when it was fairly penned and sent, Kitty felt her powers of self-endurance and respect rising rapidly; life seemed to her then as, after all, a very pleasant burden, easy to be borne. Yes! she could live—live happily, too, with

her dear old sire alone, free in heart and in fancy, fetterless as the winds; for the shadow of a shade of control, Mr. Clover never thought of exercising over her.

Was she, then, *really* happy? Why, in that case, was she so fearful, so shy of cherishing old memories? And if she was *not* fearful, how happened it that she so carefully piled away her old music; every song, every tune she had used in the by-gone? Why did she hide from sight, in the high, remote shelves of the library, all those books from which Eugene once read to her and Lucy Freer? Why was the school-room, that pleasant chamber, so studiously shunned? *Why was it*, dear, wise reader?

During all the summer days, the daughter spent much time in company with her sire; and to please her, the old man began to be quite literary in his tastes; and, with chess, and books, and gardening, the time went swiftly on to both. But a change had come over Kitty, and Mr. Clover had eyes to perceive it—but he rather rejoiced in it, and became more proud of her than ever. She was a child no longer—nor a lovely, joyous girl—but a quiet, thoughtful woman, becoming every day more beautiful, more studious, and womanly. The idea of going into the gay world, had once made her almost wild with joy, but now the proposal which the father made, that they should pass the ensuing season in the metropolis with his relations, was received with simple quiescence, and the preparations for a long sojourn from home, were calmly and soberly made. The brain of the lovely heiress was busied with no brilliant anticipations of conquest, love, and show—what could it mean?

The sickness, which, for the first time in her life, prostrated Kitty, the very week previous to the intended departure, was not, therefore, attributable to great excitement, or to any like cause. It was a slow, nervous fever, which, by degrees, wasted her strength away, and left her an infant, in helplessness, on her bed. The course of the disease could not be checked; it brought her to the very door of death, and there the angel stood, ready to break the slender thread of life—yet the destroying work, as if in mercy to the father, was delayed.

Much of the time of this sickness, her mind had wandered

sadly; and he who watched incessantly beside the girl, the adoring old man, had become cognizant of a fact, a secret, which he was not too proud to use.

And so one evening he stood, just at twilight, with another—not the nurse, nor the physician—in the sick-chamber. Kitty seemed sinking all the day, and at nightfall, the physician had left her, for a moment, almost at his (professional) wit's end. Then it was that Mr. Clover went forth, and when he came again, Eugene Lind was with him.

She was sleeping when they entered, and both of those strong men trembled when they stood together, looking silently upon her wasted, pallid face. Eugene sat down beside her, and when she awakened, the father went softly from the room.

Hush! I cannot tell you of that waking from death to life: from the assumed indifference that had nearly chilled a young heart out of existence, to the life of love. No, and I *will* not tell it; but don't you say it is because I am tired of talking, that I pause, or that I feel inefficient to tell it all. It is not true.

But still later in the season, when the brown leaves were falling from the trees in every direction, when the clouds gathered often in the sky, and the frequent rains presaged cold winter storms, there stood one of those intensely bright days, yet vouchsafed October, a little lady, frail and young, leaning on the arm of a gentleman, in the beach-grove near Woodland cottage. Cheerily fell the sunlight through the almost leafless branches, and numberless insects flitted to and fro—one of these, a tiny thing, alighted on the maiden's hand—not the one clasped in *his*! They had paused in their walk to rest, and neither had, for many moments, spoken; but, as they began, as by mutual consent, to retrace their steps, the gentleman looked up into the blue sky, exclaiming, fervently, "*How beautiful* it is, to-day;" and with a heart full of thankfulness, he murmured a name—a name with which the reader is familiar. Then he looked upon *her*, and he seemed to find all heaven reflected in her eyes—and more beautiful than the sky or the sunshine, seemed she to him; he bent his stately form, he kissed her; and, reader, her arms

wound round him in a moment—she returned, for the first time, his embracing. It was a marriage covenant, nothing more nor less!

Ha! then the insect flitted away, far, far up, above those happy mortals, with a cry heard never before, and the grove became vocal with it: how crimson grew the pale girl's face as she heard that strange, bold voice proclaiming, "*Katy Did!*"

Over the ocean flew a message, thus it run:

"She is mine, Lucy! this brave, proud, generous little Kitty, is mine! And because she is given to me in this eleventh hour, I feel that she is a gift of God—a gift unspeakably precious. My heart is *full* of thanksgiving and the voice of melody, for we are one now—one forever—in life and in death—one. I shudder when I think how she has twice been nearly lost to me, once by her own lofty pride, and again by sickness. She is so pale and weak, so unlike her former self in physical beauty, that I tremble when I look upon her; yet I know, Lucy, that she will not die. We shall both live to prove on earth, how strong a tie of love unites us."

Yes, they did live to prove it. And certainly a happier poet never breathed, than he whose bright and cheering songs, springing from a deep, clear fountain in the heart, went afterward floating over the wide earth—they were the most glorious songs of the affections.

And so you have the long and the short of the matter. More than once have "trifles light" set this great world a-gadding!

THE OWL AND "EULALIE."

"Tu-whoo! Tu-whoo!"

STEADILY the rain beat against the casement, and the wind, hushed to a soft, sighing sound, made mournful melody with it and the plaintive river-song, to the ear of Augustine Vere, as he sat, long after it grew dark, by his study window, watching the lightning, which flashed continually across the heavens. It was a comfortable place in which the gentleman was ensconced: see, now that lights are brought in, and the curtains drawn, what a tasteful look is imparted to the library by the pictures, and medallions, the pretty carpets, and tables, and those large, easy chairs. But with such a care-full expression on his face, and his evident unrest, Mr. Vere should not have remained alone on a dreary evening like this, you say; he should have been reading or chatting with his wife—he should have given the twilight, just past, to telling his children fairy-tales. Alas, poor man! he had neither wife nor child in the world—he was a widower—and little Grace, his daughter, died long ago.

Such thoughts as, I suppose, never trouble married men and fathers, had been for days troubling him, suggested by a miserable croaker in living form—it came in the shape of a chattering owl, which, with its eternal "Tu-whoo! tu-whoo!" had haunted him day in and out, till the victim began to get desperate. The afternoon that was just passed, the great, gray thing, had perched on the eave-trough just above the library-window, and struck up that monotonous tune which, till the rain began, it gave no

sign of intention of ever bringing to a close. Many a time, I repeat, had it made its unwelcome self Mr. Vere's guest—never till now had it proved such an inconceivable bore, for the train of thought only *suggested*, in past visitings, was now arriving at a climax !

But, it was not, as may be supposed, on account of any

“Loved, and lost Lenore,”

that the creature came with that reproachful interrogative, that melancholy “to who? to who?” reminding Mr. Vere of all that had gone away from his embrace, down to the grave: farther back than that page in his life-book on which the names of his dead wife and child were written, his memory went, his thoughts circled around another, one whom he had deserted in the loveliness of her youth, and the helplessness of her orphanage—and the remembrance of her was a grievous reproach to him.

He has pushed away from before him pen and paper—it was his intention, when he first seated himself at his desk, to write: let us look over his shoulder as he unfolds a scrap of printed paper, and let us read with him the lines which the old gray owl has brought back to his thought—lines which, for years, have been lying with the rubbish of the past.

A FAREWELL.

Until this night I never *felt* the word,
The dreary meaning compassed in its fold—
My soul by thine must never more be stirred !
Between us floods, estranging floods, have rolled !

How can this be ? Thou wert my life, my all—
I asked of Heaven no blessing but thy love ;
All worldly good, even fame, seemed poor and small
To thy dear love, and thou could'st faithless prove !

I strove for fame—it only was to lay
The rich gift at thy feet, to with it bend
Choosing thee, oh, lost guide ! to lead my way
Through life's sad darkness, and we part ! my friend.

I have *so* trusted—thou hast *so* deceived.
'Twas such a blessed dream, that on this earth

Thy loving aid was mine. I am bereaved—
The balance-dust outweighs my future's worth.

For, we are never more as we have been,
Yet will I faint not in my hope's recoil;
I can look up, for nothing daunts my ken,
I have no more heart-gems the world can spoil.

Farewell! farewell! it is a prayer to speak
In parting, when a hope lives with the sorrow,
The dark cloud binding me will never break,
There is no sunrise for my soul to-morrow.

EULALIE.

Why! it was strange—something very like a tear fell on that printed leaf as Mr. Vere pushed it away from him, and much in the manner of one inspired, he drew his writing materials towards him, and dashed off the following letter:

“The importunate whisperings of a voice in my soul impel me to write to you, ‘Eulalie;’ the suggestion of my *heart* would long ago have led me to do this, but reason, shame, and regret, that equalled my remorse, have forbidden; they restrain me no longer; the spirit of the past—the very distant past—is upon me. I have a confession to make—a reconciliation to crave. I see in that past a record of my wretched mistake, my miserable misdoing; and, believe me, they have worked on me their unhappy results to this hour.

“I have a longing to humble myself before you. It is an idle homage to pay at so late an hour; but I must pay it—I must pray for your forgiveness. I wish to extenuate nothing; it was my base, selfish, my contemptible pride, my unholy, impure, polluted ambition, that made me false to my vows with you. I have lived, till of late, ‘Eulalie,’ in my own shadow. There are minds (yours is one of them if it has developed as your girlhood promised,) in which the thunder-crash *accompanies* the lightning: the intense power in extreme action is seen and demonstrated. With me it has been otherwise: results have followed, to my apprehension, slowly on their causes; therefore it is, that after so many years have come and gone, I appear, penitential, and as a beggar, to throw myself at your feet, for the first time seeing my sin, (I can call it by no

lighter name,) in all its hideous proportions. *I have lived behind myself*; how else can I account for it that I am existing, self-robbed of the best good that was ever in my grasping? How else can I account for it that I am alone and solitary, unblest, unblessing? that you, whom I loved devoutly, are not here to make a fiction of such words as I am writing?

"The vow of our youth, it is *my* shame and disgrace that it was not fulfilled—its repetition was our last word in parting. Oh, Eulalie! this self-reproach!

"I never *knew* the effect my falsity produced on you. I would ask, if I dared, were you the author of these lines, 'A Farewell,' which came to me long ago—if you addressed them to me? It would be in no spirit of idle curiosity I should ask—for the knowledge could only make my self-condemnation and reproach keener still. I am alone, and longing, above all things, to hear your voice again. There is much that I might explain, much that you might find to palliate in my offence, could we once more *speak* together. I heard of you five years ago in your old home. You were then still winning honors, loved, and famous. I would seek you there, had I the courage to do it. If I may not come to you again, will you not write to me, and say that I am forgiven? You are wise; God has brilliantly gifted you; it will be a comparatively easy thing for you to pardon what, only in the hours of your youth, may have seemed a wrong. Perhaps you have even lived to rejoice that I proved false and fickle—worse than a fool. I do not offer my love anew—I only pray you answer me."

There was no more hooting of the owl that night; but the bird only paused in its duty on account of the rain. Day by day, for the succeeding three months of summer, as it had been during all the spring, it continued a frequent visitor at the cottage-eaves; and nothing prevented its coming to a speedy death, but the superstitious idea which haunted Mr. Vere, that listening to the creature was but a part of the penalty he was condemned to pay for the transgression of his youth.

In the autumn, came this letter to him:

"MY DEAR AUGUSTINE,—

"Your letter, three months old, is lying open before me. I have only to plead an unusual pressure of duty as my reason for so long delaying its answer. Will you pardon me? for, indeed, I have had you often in my thought, and have longed to convince you how truly I am your friend.

"You asked if I were the author of those lines to which you referred. I can imagine what you believe: 'Eulalie' having been my signature in those days when I was so fool-hardy as to attempt authorship. Will you credit my words, my shame in claiming them arises only from an afflicting consciousness of their entire want of artistic beauty. You must regard them, not with the eye of a critic, but as a mere passionate outbreak from a heart that fancied it was broken and wretched forever.

"Go with me for a moment to the past. It is by no flowery path I lead you back. I was seventeen years old then. You were very little older. Step by step, I could hardly trace my way to that point . . . My life has been, of latter years, exceedingly barren of incident—there are few landmarks visible. I have scarcely thought to count the mile-stones, or to look up to the guide-boards. But this is digression.

"You remember—we had met but a few times, yet in our youthful zeal we ventured to take the vows of eternal faithfulness upon us. We counted on nothing but our own power of constancy, and so were betrothed. It was foolish—we knew so little of each other. We trusted too much to that similarity of taste which had led us to one profession. You knew I had ambitious fancies—had won a trifle of attention by my verses. You, also being *literary*, had better prospects of success than I. Your uncommon powers as a critic and reviewer were even then developing; thus, as young aspirants for immortality of fame, our pursuits brought about a union between us, which we thought indissoluble. Accident parted us. During three years I think our engagement remained firm. But you were more fortunate than I—were in the world. The kind of ability you possessed was more in demand than my poetic talent. You prospered, because famous. I watched your progress proudly; I labored to become your equal. It was not after all strange,

believe me I do not think it at all strange *now*, that you found among the crowds of people with whom you became acquainted, one who seemed to you, who *was* more brilliant, more attractive, more engaging and loveable than a simple country girl, whose way of life had kept her nature from developing,—had made her quiet and reserved. As to the charge of inconstancy, I will not even prefer that. I know the power of temptation, and happily recollect my own entire want of beauty, and conversational talent.

“I am writing of these things as they seem to a woman—honestly, as they seem to me now. It costs me more of a struggle to go back again to the past myself, in my own spirit, as it was mine when young—to tell you how the sudden tidings of your marriage came to the deserted girl. Yet I feel strong to do it; and neither you nor I, I trust, are violating *any* duty, in speaking thus together of an event so long gone by. We are too old, have passed individually through too much, have learned ourselves too well to speak such things in another spirit than it is *right* for us to speak.

“There were days and weeks which went by without leaving any trace in my memory save the one hope that I might die. For a time the ability to think or act as a rational being, the thought of fame, the love of life, were over. Had the Angel of Death come to me then, I would gladly have given him my hand, and hastened his steps as he led me away. But I was to live; and once, I remember that day well, in the overflowing anguish of my heart, in the bitterness of my disappointment, I *did* write those lines of which you speak. It has been said that a woman never writes such verses from the heart. No *woman*, I suppose, *would* record such sorrow; that one who had seen seventeen years only, might, in the very abandonment and recklessness of her desolation have done it, I prove. The verses were written, were printed, and I read them, when every word that had come with a pang from my soul, returned with an honest echo there. My recovery from that shock was sudden and strange, I recollect it well. Even while I was weeping, and lamenting most bitterly, a revulsion came over me; it was not pride, nor hate for you, but shame and contempt for myself,

that I could suffer *any* disappointment to so overwhelm me. Then I deliberately battled with myself till my reason conquered my grief, and I was free again. I grew so strong as even to pray for your happiness after that—to look and listen with longing for the story of your success. And no one could have felt a greater disappointment than I, Augustine, when I learned that you had abandoned the pursuit of fame. A thought that you deserved congratulation for this, also, mingled with my regret; for I knew, by my own fortune, that you were thus escaping peculiar disappointment and trial, peculiar temptation too. I heard of you, though, in other ways, and believe me, I was glad to learn that you were married to a good and lovely woman, and that yours was a happy home. If you asked me—*are you happy?* I could answer you at once, yes—I am content with my lot—I could not wish it otherwise. Were I *not* happy, content, I would scarcely dare ask you and yours to come here. I should fear another awakening of old memories than that which your letter has caused. *Will you not come here?*

“It is long since I have poetized; when I wrote these verses, which I send you, I was thinking only of you. They will come to you fraught with another tone than the ‘Farewell’ you mentioned. My heart was glowing with a true, friendly feeling for you when I wrote them; can you call to mind the day of which they were written?

I very, very often think of thee,
 And of that lovely day when we, together
 Through the wild woods and fields went merrily,
 As blithe wert thou as that bright summer weather.
 No faintest cloud flecked the clear sapphire sky;
 Oh, dost remember how the sun that morning
 Trode, “like a god,” his course, and from on high
 Looked his proud smile, vouchsafed for earth's adorning?
 Dost thou remember how the woods were hushed,
 And how those waters crept, so slow and solemn
 To the high wall, how leaping far they gushed
 To quickened life, 'neath their own misty column?
 A dearer friend or day I shall not see—
 Dost thou remember, dost thou think of me?

Remember us! for we are gone afar,
That day and I, and summer hours are ended.
Dear love, I tread beneath another star,
We dreamed beneath *one* star our fate was blended.
Remember us! the sunshine will come back
I pray to herald thee more blest affection,
And if the shadows spread along thy track,
Think! without sunlight they have no reflection!
Wild storms are glorious; oh, if they dash
Thy best hopes to and fro in wild commotion,
See! midst the tempest and the thunder-crash
From the far depths rise the pure pearls of ocean!
I have no fear for thee in weal or wo,
Thy brave, high heart, thy hero-heart I know.

“Adieu, Augustine. Do not falsify my prophetic words.
Believe me ever truly your friend,

“EULALIE.”

There was a response, eager and instant, given to that letter.

“You *will* receive me—you even bid me come to you! oh, ‘Eulalie!’ let me tell you how I come, with what hope, with what exceeding thankfulness. Through my stagnant heart a new tide of life is flowing—the rainbow—the glory-hue is over all the world again, and I also am young once more—for you have forgiven me! Do I err in thinking that coming to you now, we shall both lose sight of all the past years, and be as in our youth, affianced? What have I written? It is that which lies in my inmost heart, ‘Eulalie,’ its most treasured hope, most sacred idea! I have lived for years alone. God took her from the earth, whom I suffered to come between you and me. She was a glorious, a beautiful woman; a blessing while she lived, an angel long before she died. If I *knew* what I believe, that she is my guardian angel, aware of all my thoughts for you, I would not shrink before such knowledge: she would rejoice if I could make reparation in any shape for the sin of my youth.

“Will you suffer me to come to you with such thoughts? will your kindness receive—will your compassion refrain from condemning? will your *love* await me? What do I ask? Forgiveness was a small thing compared with this.—I will fill any measure of greatness that you could wish, if you will so

receive me. Does it sound to you like barter? You have fame enough to satisfy, might be your answer. I know it well—but I will lead you on—I will myself scale a higher height, which you have not yet dared attempt. Your presence, your words, would be a continual inspiration. Remaining as I am, I shall inevitably be lost—desperate—lonely—*nothing!* With hopes such as a mere friend never cherished, I would come to you. *May* I thus come? Your answer decides my life—it will send me back to the outer darkness, or forward through the pearly gates to a realm of light and glory. I am waiting your answer—think, ‘Eulalie,’ *how* it is I wait!”

There was reparation such as the deserted orphan in her bitterest sorrow could not have wished, visited on Augustine Vere in the answer which he speedily received to his appealing note.

“I am distressed beyond measure—I cannot forgive myself—am astonished, annoyed I would say, but the word expresses too lightly the real grief that I feel in reading your letter, Augustine. Did you, indeed, think of me in a lover-light, when you wrote? Do you *mean* it, when you say, ‘you have ventured your future happiness in a thought of me.’ God help you! God help us both! I cannot sufficiently deplore this sad eventuation.

“I have friendship that I can give you, faithful, pure, and good as one human being ever offered to another—I have even *love* for you—but I am bound by other ties as well. Is it possible that you do not know I am a wife, a mother? It is four years since I married. When your first letter came to me, trusting to your own and my integrity, I was *glad* to hear from you; glad that you thought my friendship worth the asking; I did not imagine till the letter came, which has so troubled me, that you had other thoughts than of reconciliation. My friend, I have but one prayer now to offer for you. Be a dreamer no longer, arouse and act! come into the world, come *here* if you will; I shall be glad to see you, and proud to show you my husband and my children. I long to know you as taking that place among honored men which you will be justified in occupying. I *long* to ~~see~~ you: I can say what I will not write, for I

must not render my words liable to misconstruction; come, and I will speak, knowing well that spirits undefiled and pure, listen. We are children no longer; we are laborers in one vineyard; are we not? We can assist one another in our work, can counsel and guide. You must not waste any more of your years. There is work to be done: fail you not!"

He read these words with tears, but he obeyed their bidding. Every line of the letter pierced his soul; and the hooting owl almost maddened him with its "to who?" but the *sickness* of his heart had passed, he lifted up his spirit, weak, though it was with remorse and a vain regret, and he grew strong again.

After all, "Eulalie" died first, and of a broken heart! Not love-broken was it. She never panted for better gods of earth than were given her in her own home, her children and her husband. But the world, the coward, soulless world, saw her, in the strength of her purity, extending a friendly and directing hand to Augustine Vere—saw her as it seemed, guiding and leading him who needed such a counsellor as she proved, and then a voice of scandal rose—

"A whisper broke the air,
A soft, light tone and low,
Yet barbed with shame and wo."

And the whisper gathered strength and force, and went out abroad into the world, and smiling lips repeated it, and hard hearts lent it credence, till it came back at last in all its terrible exaggeration, its awful falsity with a "thunder-tone" to Eulalie. *Then* she died!

Would that the grim, gray owl might haunt forever the homes of those whose poisoned arrow found her gentle heart! Would that a jot of the tender sympathy, the holy tenderness that made her life so precious to dear "hearts of home," might fall on them, (an unwonted blessing it would prove!) teaching them that gratitude and love, instead of "envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness," were due,

"*They* know to who! to-who!"

MAGNETIC INFLUENCES.

"POVERTY had made fierce assaults on my father's house, and when I reached my tenth year my childhood was over, and the necessity of labor upon me. Thus far, I had been struggling with the trouble and the sorrow that come with want, and this was the reason—oh, it assuredly was not a want of natural affection!—that I went from home for the first time, and set out in life for myself, without grief, without fear, without even a thought of shrinking from that future on which, alone and unfriended, I launched my frail life-boat. When I look upon that far-off time now, I can see something tragically comic in the final parting with my mother and brothers. Not one of us shed a tear, but I know my mother's voice trembled when she looked her last on me, and bade me be a good boy, and keep from evil company. The blessing of that poor, struggling, blessed woman was all that I took with me when I went out on my uncertain pilgrimage in search of bread and work.

"There were four of us children. Joseph, my oldest brother, was learning a trade. Tom and Martin, both younger than I, had as yet found no place in the service of richer people, though Tom, then eight years old, was promised some situation in the spring. From the time when I first learned to read, or to really know anything, my great desire was to be a printer—that was my father's trade; but he and my mother always discouraged the wish. My father all his life had been unfortunate, and his mind was not strong to rise up, and brave, and conquer the difficulties in his way; he sunk under them all, and his bad habits had greatly added to our household misery and want. This it was that made my mother shrink from the thought of one of

her children learning such a trade, because her husband had done so miserably by it, she imagined it was the poor trade that was to blame, when in fact the fault was his own, the failure his own, the inefficiency his own. The opposition I met with at home only decided my predilections, and when I set out for Burlington, which city was distant only about twelve miles from the place where we lived, my firm and only intention was to learn the printer's trade.

"I had my reason for so firmly adhering to this choice: one of the few books my father owned was a biography of Franklin, and from that, and some other books, I gathered that the surest way to distinction and place led from the printing-office. Perhaps I did not covet honor and placé so much at first, but I felt that the printing-house was also the vestibule of the temple of knowledge to the children of the poor, and there were golden fruits which I longed to taste, and money which I wished to change in that temple.

"I remember distinctly the day when I first made application to a publisher for employment. Oh, what a wild and hazardous attempt it was, for a young, misshapen child like me to make! I went to many offices and asked for work in vain; and at last, more in desperation than hope, I found my way into a poorer and smaller house, where in one room the working-presses and workmen were gathered together. I had been advised by those of whom I sought employment, to go home and wait till I grew older, and larger, and better able to work: but I would not be entirely cast down; I would not think of having to return to my poor mother; I *would* find something to do. It was in this spirit that I entered the *Journal* office. Mason, the man who carried on the publishing, was there when I went in, but he seemed just then very busy, so I went away and stood with folded hands in an out-of-the-way place till he called me to him. I did not think he had noticed me as I went in, or that he really *saw* me when he lifted his gray eyes upon me for an instant.

"When he called me, 'Boy, come here; what's your business in this place?' I went up to him and said, boldly, for I began to think it was 'live or die' with me, 'Work in your office, sir.'

'You are too young,' he said; 'you are—are lame?' 'No, sir,' I answered, 'I am not *lame*, nor very young. I am old enough to work, and poor enough, too.' 'Are you very poor?' he asked, quickly, and with an interest of which he seemed almost ashamed; then he added: 'What could you do here?' 'Learn to be a printer,' said I, but with a sinking heart; 'what Franklin was.' 'You can be of no *use* to me for a long time: what shall you do if you go back home?' 'I shall not go,' I said, with determination. 'What! a runaway?' 'No, sir! a poor woman's son, who has lived on his mother's earnings long enough.' When I said this, a look, as though the questioner had himself not yet forgotten what it was to weep, passed over Mr. Mason's face. He seemed, for a moment or two, lost in thought, and it was very gravely that he then looked up and said: 'Are you inclined to be industrious? to *earn* every morsel of food you eat, every hour you sleep. Going to work in such a place as this is no sport, my boy; it's the hardest kind of labor. There are very few who turn out to be Franklins.'

" 'I am here to work,' I replied; 'I *must* work, or die.' He got up at once, when I said this, and leading me across the room to a man, gray-headed, yet not much older than himself, said to him: 'Thompson, I wish you would look after this boy: he has come here to learn the trade: don't push him too hard, but make him learn.' Thompson looked at me an instant, and with a 'Yes, sir,' resumed his proof-reading. Mr. Mason walked off a step or two, but then turned back. 'Thompson,' he said, 'can you find anything to set him at work on to-day?' 'He shall have lots to do, if that's what he wants,' said the man, briefly, yet not unkindly. 'Let him go home with you to your boarding-house, and you will confer a favor on *me* by looking after him occasionally, my dear fellow; we must make a man of him.' And Mason went off.

"Thompson turned to his proof-reading again then, and continued occupied with it for some time. When he had finished his work, he took out his watch, and glancing at it, arose, and laid his papers away; then striding toward the door, he said to me, 'Come.' I had been gazing steadfastly at him till he spoke, and though no physiognomist, I was not afraid to obey him at

once, and to ask him where we were going. 'To dinner,' was the reply; and to dinner, and breakfast, and tea, I went daily with that man for five years, and had never occasion to question the entire confidence with which, on that happy morning, I accompanied the Quaker bachelor to the place where he boarded.

"Thompson was not an old man, though his hair was very gray; he had the silent, subdued manner and look of one who has passed through much tribulation, and in all his suffering remembered that the wicked shall not always triumph, that the just shall live by faith. A more thoroughly just man, I never met; a kinder, more forgiving soul have I never seen. His meekness, being essentially of the spirit, never assumed the cringing, unnatural garb of the hypocrite. I have thought since, that the light of his excellency should have been rather placed on the hill-top, than suffered to burn in that narrow, contracted sphere of labor; that such virtue and true godliness might, but for a fate the most untoward, have been mightily influential in a wide sphere of action. But when I have thought so, it has invariably occurred to me afterward, 'Perhaps the good seed that his example was permitted to sow in the hearts of the young men who came within his influence was, after all, as important work as he could otherwise have possibly performed in the Lord's service.' If my pen were equal to the task, if my heart were sanctified for the work, I would give the world a 'record of the good man's life;' but I cannot do it yet. I am not meet for the task. Perhaps—some day——

"Thompson wrote much and constantly for the paper; to it he had devoted his mental energies for fifteen years, and the work, as far as worldly riches were concerned, had poorly paid him; but his ambition was not for riches, and every number of the paper issued, was dear as a child to him. Nearly all the correspondence of the *Journal* was in his hands. As a critic, he might have been thought severe, and at times unnecessarily so; but it was because of his determination, formed in youth, as he himself told me, to maintain (so far as he had to do with it) the high honor and integrity of the press, unbiassed, unsold, that he spoke out plainly convictions, which, in another case, his charity would certainly have concealed in his own breast. The

appearance of this man always reminded me of a tamed lion. He was of immense frame, but very thin, and his Quaker garb gave him almost the look of a Titan. I have mentioned him thus particularly, because, from the first, he was as a father to me.

"I have at *this* time no exciting events to narrate of my connection with him. He operated on *my* destiny only in the way (oh, how powerful that is!) which the loved and honored elder friend may work, without ever formally reading one chapter of advice to his young companion. I loved him as I had never loved a human being, from the very first day of my acquaintance with him; from the time when he first placed the working stand for me, and gave me my lesson in the glorious art of printing. My heart beat quicker than it ever had before, when his toil-stained, bony hand touched mine: that was the hand which placed me firmly on the ladder whereby I fancied I was to mount to greatness!

"From the day when Mr. Thompson was witness to the indentures drawn up between Mr. Mason and myself, (which day I may truly say was the very happiest of my life,) the bachelor seemed to view me as his own peculiar property; the care with which he watched me, was like that a guardian angel might have exerted to lead a helpless, lonely child, in the right way. At the first I slept in a room occupied by two other of the printer-boys; but one night they got into a furious quarrel, and raised such a disturbance that I escaped in terror to Mr. Thompson's room, and always after that I shared his bed. I lived with him in Mr. Mason's employ until my sixteenth year, when my dear friend died. My trade was well learned, and when my master failed, which he did shortly after Thompson died, he generously gave me my liberty, with credentials of professional ability. I had nothing to do now but to plan and to fulfil. My chief hope amounted to but this: I would, some day, when able, purchase an interest in one of the popular weekly literary papers; and there was one thought which supported me in all my wildest hopes. The year in which I was born, saw the death of one of the most glorious sons of fame. He was a man whom 'kings

delighted to honor,' whom the world revered, the great 'all-sided one.' *Had* any measure of his spirit fallen on me?

"I read a memoir of this greatly beloved author one stormy night during Thompson's illness. When I left the office at evening, Mr. Mason handed it to me for critical notice, and I read it from beginning to end to my friend, before we slept. We were both carried away with the charming style of the narrative, and with the deep interest of the subject; and when I closed the book at last, Thompson said, in a tone of half-regret:

"'Warren, *I* should have been an author.'

"'You are,' I answered.

"'No! no!' he exclaimed, 'it's a wasting time I've had of it; this job-work with the intellect is surely not the thing, at least for one who *feels* that his range should be higher. Warren, dost thou aspire to be an editor?'

"'It is one of the most commanding positions a man can occupy,' I said; 'assuredly, sir, I do not aspire to anything better.'

"'If thou wert wealthy, and could afford to conduct a paper for thine own amusement, AND the good of others, or for thine own intellectual exertion, it might be well enough: oh, it is a cramping, tempting office, for a poor man!'

"'Do you know, sir,' I said, chiefly desirous to change the current of his thoughts, 'this poet died the very year I was born?'

"'Dost thou argue smooth things from *that*, my boy?' asked he, with an almost sighing voice. 'Thou dost then believe in the transmission of soul?'

"'Not that, but ——'

"'But the book has opened a new theme of thought for thee? It is well: the fact that thou art capable of the thought argues much. Well! why shouldst thou *not* wear the mantle of the great departed?'

"I could not answer 'why,' but this I know, there was a great hope borne into my soul that night, and for a time nothing could dislodge it. Since then? Dost thou ask, '*Since then?*' I have not yet finished my course. I remember, after Thomp-

son slept that night, I wrote some verses, suggested by this new thought. I can recall now only one, beginning :

“ ‘ My birth fell in thy death-year ; *was* it chance
That sent me light as thy grand eyes grew dim ?
Across the record of thy life I glance,
And to my soul another hope would win.’

“ In my twenty-fifth year, I found myself in a great commercial city, in the editorial chair of a well-established literary paper, of which I had, by purchase, become the joint proprietor. Thompson had left to me, by will, nearly all the little property he possessed, and industriously and faithfully had I endeavored to add to it, till the darling wish of my heart was accomplished. It had been, as Mr. Mason foretold, no play-work by which I came up to this station : by the hardest manual labor, and by active head-work alone, I managed to accomplish all. It had been nearly fifteen years of such labor as brings premature age on a man, but the thought of my Elijah’s mantle had made me equal to it. In the world of the pre-existent might I *not* have walked with *him* side by side ? Might not a portion of the spirit of the great departed have fallen, as he soared heavenward, on *me* ? Me, the weak and helpless child, whose first breath was drawn in a world about to be bereaved of one of its mightiest minds, about to hush its heart with awful grief, to hear his parting cry ?

“ If this thought *was* a vanity, it nevertheless acted on me as an inspiration. The early youth of the poet had been spent in poverty as keen, and want as imperative as mine : how gloriously, with the power of true genius, with the patience which is the hand-maid of true genius, had he struggled through all the clouds of darkness to a day of peerless brightness ! And I said to myself as I thought of all this : ‘ It may be a poetic, extravagant, presumptuous fancy, this of mine, but *I will* yet be dear to my country as he was to his Germany : if the thought *is* a fancy, and not an inspiration, I will prove, for my own satisfaction, that mind can make a reality of an ambitious imagining.’

“ My position as an acknowledged editor of a literary paper,

introduced me at length to new circles. My partner was much older than myself: after graduating at college, he had adopted this profession from choice. As a long-acknowledged 'member of society,' he had much the advantage of me; and his rare talents would have secured success to any paper he chose to conduct, so long as he continued faithful to its interests. My knowledge of society had been gathered chiefly from books: even had my social rank, anterior to editorship, secured free entrance to refined and cultivated intellectual society, the constant and severe application demanded by my necessitous condition would have prevented me; and when Mr. Curtis insisted, one night, on my accompanying him to a select literary party at the house of one of his fashionable friends, where he promised I should see a human arts-union, I accepted the invitation in much trepidation, for I was keenly alive to the personal disadvantages under which I labored.

"What was the chief impression, the most lasting memory of that night? It was then that I first met with Jane Baltimore!

"I remember, it was with a thrill of commiseration that, shortly after entering the splendid saloon, I observed her standing alone by herself, her eyes gazing on one of the lovely pictures which crowded the walls. The commiseration was as keen for myself as for her, when I thought on us two there; we of all others seemed so out of place in the magnificence of that dwelling. We, alone, I thought, gave unmistakable evidence that we had come out of a hard land of bondage, pursued through the sea of division by opposing foes; dwellers in the home of all our aspirations, if indeed we were dwellers, and not pilgrims and strangers, more by miracle than in any other way. Certainly we did stand among the 'elect of genius,'—was it by courtesy, or by right? One thing is certain, notwithstanding, nay, *because* of the early struggle and the hard, unequal contest, and the victory. I have seen that girl standing, since that night, no longer neglected or out of place; ay! even among the most polished, robed in her intellectual beauty, and it was a more brilliant raiment than any jewelled robe. But of this hereafter.

"This girl, 'Jane Baltimore,' was in the course of the evening introduced to me by Mr. Curtis, as one of the contributors for our paper. Before I entered the office she had written, and since then, constantly, for its columns: her pen treated on all subjects, and ably on all. Personally, I had known nothing of her; had merely been told that she was a paid contributor. Her productions, whether poetry, prose, imaginative, political, or religious, had always appeared anonymously, and it had seemed strange to me that this should be so. I did not want to believe that poverty was the motive that guided a woman's pen so continuously. Once I had asked Mr. Curtis of her, and he said that the young person was writing for a living, and that was all he knew of her. He himself did not till this evening make her personal acquaintance, and then it was through our hostess, Mrs. Bey. (This lady, I may here mention, was a devoted patroness of 'rising genius,' and she prided herself much on the office. She it was who, having learned in some way of Miss Baltimore's existence and talent, forthwith numbered her among the young 'lions' whom it was her peculiar duty to pet and look after, till they grew in fame to respectable dimensions, when it would of course be her happy privilege to lay claim to their everlasting gratitude.)

"That the young 'unknown' had appeared on this occasion unwillingly, was obvious, for she was a stranger by station as well as reputation to all there present; and as I said before, it was therefore with a feeling of compassion, both for her and myself, that I sought an introduction, and devoted myself to her during the remainder of the evening. Understand me, it was not with a *thought* of condescension, which would have been most ridiculous in me, who had come up from the depths to the surface, nor with an idea of pity, other than that I felt due to myself, in still greater measure. If I had offered my attentions in that spirit of common but unpardonable vanity which admitted the idea that I was conferring a favor, I should have been at once repelled by the reception my advances met. There was a coldness and constraint in all Miss Baltimore's words, which, had I not learned a great deal of her intellect from her written thoughts, would have struck me as stupidity; but her

reserve roused my curiosity, or rather that obstinate spirit which in me was for ever up and determined to conquer every thing that looked like an obstacle. And when I read, or fancied I read in her manner, 'My mind is my own, a stranger shall not intermeddle with it,' I felt that the secret of it lay in the neglect, poverty, and seclusion, in which her life was passed.

"Arm-in-arm we moved from the larger saloon to a smaller apartment, where there were fewer guests. We had been gazing on two remarkable pictures, 'Beatrice Cenci,' and 'Ulalume,' both which seemed absolutely and startlingly alive with passion. The first of these was the representation of a magnificent woman, trembling over the death-sentence, and in the proud consciousness that she has won a nobler boon than life in another case had been: in the other was the very intensest out-breathing of love, in its full devotedness, that I have ever seen or dreamed—Ulalume dying to life, and to the life of life, *to him!* After gazing without a word upon these pictures, my companion made a sudden motion forward, but did not otherwise express a wish to escape the fascinating, overpowering charm of the portraits; and so it was that we went into a farther saloon. 'What a sweet picture, so quiet and peaceful!' was her exclamation, stopping short before the mantel above which was suspended one of the most exquisite portraits of childhood.

"I recognised the work as the production of a young artist whose acquaintance I had recently made: on my first visit to his studio this just-finished picture formed its chief adornment; and I said to her, 'Theodore Young has a brilliant future in store for him: he has only to exert himself, and he will win a high prize.'

"'Theodore Young!' she repeated, (and I confess she had listened to my last remark with far more interest than she had previously shown;) 'is he really an artist?'

"'By their works ye shall know them,' answered I; 'do you think the painter of that face deserving of the name?'

"'Yes. Is the artist a slightly lame young man, with peculiar, bright-blue eyes?'

"'He is; and one of the handsomest men I have ever met.'

“ ‘And you say he is an artist by profession. Does he live in this city?’

“ ‘He has, since I knew him; but I have made his acquaintance very recently.’

“ ‘But, knowing him at all, you will be able to answer if I also am a true artist. I can however copy only with words. I had a friend long ago whose name was the same as your friend’s. We were children together brought up in the same village. I have not seen him in a great many years. He was a beautiful boy, his manners most winning, and kind, and amiable; but not amiable from mental weakness: I could never conceive how that should have been mistaken for merit; but he had always the most passionate love for beautiful things, and his character was most beautiful. I should have thought that he would have proved a poet rather than an artist, but I suppose the gift is much the same. When I knew him, he was too young to be professedly either; at least, he was neither in deed. His hair was light and curling. He was slightly lame, as I said, but this was never an impediment to his free movements; he was as agile as most boys who have the free use of their limbs. Could such a boy, by any possibility, grow into the man you know?’

“ ‘So possible that it is not probable Mr. Young is any other than your early friend. You have drawn him to the life; but he is very much older than you.’

“ A hand rested lightly on my shoulder as I spoke thus, and a low voice said, ‘How came you in this den of lions, my Daniel, pray? Introduce me;’ and turning, I saw the young artist close beside me. Under the circumstances, I deemed myself excusable for saying, without her previous assent, ‘Miss Baltimore, the artist, Mr. Young, craves an introduction.’ She bowed; they exchanged a few words, as one stranger with another; and when we were shortly after again alone, she said, ‘I would not speak of the past to him, not of *my* past here. Should we meet again, and it seem desirable — But,’ she said quickly, interrupting herself, ‘you will do me a favor by not mentioning to Mr. Young what I have said of him. Excuse

me, but the professional relations we hold emboldens me to say what could not be said to a *stranger*.'

"I accompanied Miss Baltimore to her lodging-place, in one of the quietest streets of the city; and I did so sincerely cherishing the hope of meeting her again. We had both received invitations for the literary parties to be given weekly by Mrs. Bey that winter, and I did not fail to express the wish that I might often meet my valued contributor there. She was gifted—a genius. Was that the magnetic attraction? For I felt irresistibly drawn toward her: she was poor, and without beauty; what else could it be?

"It was during the continuance of those winter soirees that the young artist, Mr. Young, learned from her own lips of their childhood's friendship, and they became again in manhood and womanhood the best of friends. They stood on equal footing now; they both were laboring geniuses. Though as children they had been thrown together, his station then in the world had been far higher than hers. They had been educated at the same primary school, but with this difference: she as the adopted, half-servant, half-what? of an excellent family; he the only son of a gentleman of reputed wealth. That wealth had proved to be of a very shadowy character, and Theodore had been early left an orphan, and only half-educated. In this one respect the adopted had a little the advantage, for she was sent to school from her fifth till her thirteenth year. Her benefactress, who was without children, in dying had left her a sum of money, but it was not sufficient to keep her above want, and the ambitious girl early resolved to be an authoress.

"When Theodore Young left his native village he and Jane were very young; recollection of her had quite, and but for seeming accident for ever, passed from his mind; but now, and thus, they had met again, and very pleasantly, and perhaps not a little proudly.

"The romance which occasionally flowed from Miss Baltimore's pen convinced me that she was capable of great things in the exercise of her imaginative powers, and I felt as though the constant flow demanded by necessity of her intellect in channels of politics, and still less inviting themes, was doing

injustice to one whom nature had evidently prepared for a high and beautiful exercise of thought and fancy. My business connection with her warranted, as the result proved, the suggestion on my part, that she should exert her mind in producing articles of a less ephemeral nature than were suited for the columns of a newspaper. She listened to the proposal with such evident gratitude, that I lost no time in introducing her name to the editor of one of the first-class magazines, and was happily successful in arranging for her contributions to it.

"The reserve and quiet of the young girl, which she wore as armor of defence in her intercourse with the world, was laid partially aside, with that expression of confidence which did me infinite honor, as well as herself. And as week by week my acquaintance with her mind increased, I felt that I loved her well; that she was becoming dearer, more precious than any other human being had ever been to me—than even Thompson. Yet love with me was not a passion. As the inherent treasures of her mind became unfolded to me, from admiration and respect, which bordered on to reverence for the purity and artlessness of my friend, I rapidly acquired a warmer regard, and bore about the thought of her in my daily life as of something intrinsically precious. Education had not done much toward enriching Jane Baltimore's mind; none knew this better than herself: it was all inborn genius which she brought out to please, and enlighten, and charm others. Yet I never met with one more fully alive to mental necessities than she; and it was her hope to toil forward from her daily need to a resting-place, where she might sit down in the shade of the tree of knowledge, and ceasing to teach others what God had told her, learn in turn of them.

"With my love came naturally the thought of marriage. I had nothing wherewith to endow a wife but a toil-worn hand, a small purse, a true heart; but I might give to this woman companionship, protection, and assistance toward that place and time of needful rest for which she was striving. I did not believe that my suit would prove unsuccessful. I knew indeed there was no friend in whom she placed a more firm reliance than on me, yet on that consideration I did not base my hope. It would have been sheer selfishness in me to so interpret the

sisterly regard which I knew she felt for me. I found myself at last penning this letter to her: it was a true exposition of all that I felt for her in my inmost heart. My feelings were as calm when I wrote it as the words themselves are. There was no *passion* whatever in my regard:

“MY DEAR MISS BALTIMORE: I am about to speak of what, in late days, has become matter of engrossing importance and interest to me. You will not receive this as an ordinary business letter, although, in reality, I would now transact an affair of business with you that must affect us as long as we live. I do not ask now for an article for my paper, but one of contract for my heart, which shall bind us for all time. Our pursuits, our aims, our tastes are one. We are both alone in the world. What do we need most? Does your heart answer you, as mine does, (it is on this high hope I base my letter,) a sympathizing companion, a familiar and constant friend, a heart that shall never deceive us, a voice that shall be ever ready to answer our hearts’ call, an ear that is never deaf? It is *not* good for man to be alone—alone as I have been since I first went out to struggle in the world. Tell me, is it good for you? Can we not at a *home* fire kindle larger and brighter thoughts, and take to ourselves in that holy retirement new hope and refreshed courage? I believe it. I trust in HEAVEN that you do also; but,

‘If not by a dearer name
Yet than all other,

then, as a brother, let me still continue what I have been, and am, your admiring friend and sincere well-wisher.’

“I awaited the answer to this letter in some anxiety. It came speedily, and thus:

“DEAR WARREN: I have but just received your letter. I reply to it with such a blessed, confident, fraternal feeling, as does away with all that embarrassment which, but for your constant kindness in past days, might otherwise at this time have attended the expression of my thoughts. My brother, we

are blest indeed ! If it will satisfy you, hear this : For all the solitude, and sorrow, and longing of the past, I have received a full recompense, not of reward, but of infinite mercy. Because my eyes are clear to see in you a man in whom I can wholly confide, (not with rapturous idolatry, which I believe to be the falsest of image-worship,) I am proud to think that you have asked me to bear your name. I will yet do honor to it, as you have done already. You will see I do not wish, I have no thought indeed, of escaping labor. I will bear my part on our future way, thanking God that we shall tread together. May He and His holy angels have you in their keeping."

"Before assuming marriage vows, I determined to revisit my native place, which I had not done since, when a child, I left it. Not a word had ever come to me of the fortunes of my parents and brothers. Now that I was capacitated to help them, though it was in the very smallest measure, I felt it my duty to see if they needed such aid as was in my poor power to give. Heaven knows I had had a struggle of it heretofore, but my affairs were every day brightening, and it might be that if they needed it, even I could now advance the prospects of my younger brothers. I had often thought of this, and as often, from sheer inability to help, even if the distress at home was ever so great, had kept away from there—in a selfish fear, I acknowledge.

"I went home to a desolated hearth. My Mother's rest was in the grave: she had died, on the birth of a daughter, not a great while after I left home. My poor father, too, had long since gone the way of all the earth. I found their graves in the old church-yard, marked by two white wooden crosses—meet emblems for them who, all their lives, from birth to death, had borne a cross of poverty ! From the burial-place, I went to a little old public house, which stood, in its insignificance, looking as though aghast at the staring brick building which had of late been built at the junction of two railroads that passed through the town. This mean, poor, wooden building had been, at the time of my recollections of the place, the only tavern there. It was the only thing that appeared natural, and what a miniature of its former self it looked now !

"The instant my eyes caught sight of the landlord of this house, I recollected him : the same florid, good-looking, cheerful personage who had bought the 'White Swan' just before I went from home. He did not look ten years older. His work had not been of a kind that wearies the brain, and marks the face and form. There was no danger of his recognising *me*, and so entering into a conversation with him about the village-folk, I drew this much from him : That Gilbert Brooks, my poor, poor father, and his eldest son, had died inebriates ; that of the second boy, called Warren, nothing had been heard since his first leaving home long ago ; that as to the two youngest boys, they were serving on the ocean as common sailors, and had been for some years. 'I've reason to remember the family,' said the man when he had narrated thus far ; 'there was a mighty stir here when the little girl was born, and Mrs. Brooks died.' 'How ?' I asked carelessly ; and the gossip needed no farther encouragement to speak. 'There was a woman staying at my house at the time : her husband had got hurt on the railroad ; and folks was talking so much about these poor people, and the babe that was so unfortunate as to come into this world of sin and misery ——.' The man stopped short here, and offered me a glass, which, I declining, he finished for himself, and continued : 'Old Brooks was bad off, no mistake ; and this here woman, she took an interest in the child, and finally concluded she'd take it to bring up herself. We all thought she'd do her duty by the poor thing, if any one ; a pious soul you never see.' 'How old would the girl be now, if she were living ?' I asked. The man fell to reckoning, and finally said, 'In her nineteenth year.'

"I walked off ; a thought was getting too strong for my brain. I paced up and down the old piazza, longing to ask one other question, and was too cowardly to dare it. But at last I could endure the suspense no longer, and going up to the inn-keeper, I said, 'Do you chance to remember the name of the woman who took the child ?' 'Yes, by this token,' he replied, starting up and leading me by the arm to the window in the bar-room, which looked out upon a large yard that was graced by one single, immense elm-tree. Pointing to it, he said : 'There ~~was~~

a hanging-bird's nest built there the same year, by the most splendid bird I ever see. It 'tracted attention. Nobody knew what kind of bird it was. This woman said it was a Baltimore oriole, and she said that was *her* name, and bid my little girl to watch over the pretty creature for her sake. The bird lived in that same tree for years; and that's the reason I remember Mrs. Baltimore's name so well.'

"And they had called *HER* Jane, after my mother! . . . And in my sister I had lost my wife! Was it enough? I could hardly answer myself then; I confess it would be a less difficult matter now.

"When I returned to ——, I took no time to think the matter over: the dim likeness to some thing or some one, I had loved long ago, which I had always traced in Jane, took a new meaning now—did not mount any longer to an unknown sphere on my transcendental faith in pre-existences. It was with the thought of a brother going to a beloved sister, that I began to think of the Jane I was going home to. The *astonishment* of discovery over, I felt that it was all right and joyous. The Magnetic Influence was explained to me!

"I had been gone little over a fortnight: my first motion on reaching the city was to call upon my sister. When I sent my name to her, a card was returned, on which was written, 'I am glad to hear of your return, but am not well to-day. Excuse me, dear Warren.' 'Show me to Miss Baltimore's room,' I said to the waiter who brought the message, and the moment after I stood in Jane's little parlor. I went there with the freedom of a brother, but my friend was of course not able to look upon my intrusion in that light, and I fancied her surprise had a little of indignation in it. 'I could not help it,' I said, apologising to her look; 'I must see you to-day.' She blushed as I spoke, half rose, then sat again, and finally buried her face in her hands, without speaking. 'I must know the meaning of this; you astonish me,' I said. She looked up, but every particle of color had fled from her face, and taking a letter which lay open on the table beside her, threw herself on the floor beside me, and said, 'You shall know, read; but forgive me, oh, forgive me, Warren!'

“TO ONE WHO IS THE THOUGHT OF MY THOUGHTS, THE BRIDE OF MY HEART—JANE BALTIMORE:

“I have reached a point, at last, which I have for two years past been striving to gain. I have a home to offer her who has become the object of my adoration. Regard for you alone, dear lady, has prevented my saying what my own inclination has tempted me often and often to speak. For myself, your love—I dreamed that I might win it—and poverty, had been enough; but I must have ease and leisure to offer you, beside my love, or nothing. I imposed this necessity on myself, and feel that it is well to have done so, for all difficulties are conquered at last! at last! and now—shall I plead for naught? Oh, I have looked into your eyes, and through them gazed forward into such a future as poets dream of, as laborers only realize! More than the loveliest creations of renowned artists, have you been to me in your divine humility, your patience, and your loveliness. The mere thought of you has been inspiration—assurance. In *your* pursuits have you ever looked forward to a pleasant place, a shelter quiet, and peaceful, and holy, over which the good angels will love to guard? In such a paradise have I centred my best hopes. I have no wish to stand in the Temple of Fame, a *dweller* there; and you—oh, are not you content to go from this noise, and strife, and confusion, to the shade of our own vine and fig-tree, where we may find shelter and rest? JANE, will you go with me thither?”

“A shudder passed over me, almost a pang, as I read this letter, and saw *her* at my feet weeping so violently. I had never seen her weep before. Surely, it was not such feeling that *my* letter had aroused. But I conquered my selfish thought with a recollection: she was my sister still! and by her conduct must I not so judge it? She, too, *had* known of this *magnetic influence*! I said: ‘If you *could*, you would obey your heart’s dictates, and write no sisterly answer to this proposal; your whole soul would leap out in a blind passion, as his; you would rush to his embrace, not take him calmly by the hand. Do I not read your heart aright?’ There was still no answer.

“‘And in God’s name, go,’ I said solemnly; ‘there is no *bar*.

Jane, dear, dear Jane, I have heard that we had one father, one mother: you *are* my own dear sister! One who'—— Never, never shall I forget that look of love (a sister's!) and gratitude she cast upon me as I spoke thus; the next instant she was fainting at my feet.

“That I recovered with no serious injury from the shock which, I confess, the conviction gave me, that before she knew our relationship Jane had infinitely preferred another before me, let the statement that I also humbly sued on my knees for the love of the dear little woman who is now my wife, answer; and the reader will be assured that I learned speedily to be satisfied with the solution of that mystery of magnetic influence, when I declare that I can now, as I did long ago, read Jane's answer (no matter how I chanced upon it) to him who is her husband, without a sigh:—

“‘I HAD thought it was mere admiration of your genius, a friendly interest in your success, a passionate love for your profession; I had deceived myself into anything but the thought that *love* was in the secret of my regard for you. When you gave me the key to your own heart—oh, it is my joy, my pride, my glory, to confess it—my own opened at the sight! I needed not to ask myself, *could* I love? *is* this love which makes my heart to throb so, and my tears to fall? Oh, when I knelt that night to pray, and one name only was in my heart, one thought only in my head; when all that I should have asked, grace to support me in this time of joyful need, was forgotten, a blessing upon *you* was all to which I could give utterance! Now am I satisfied! There is no other good in this life for which I can ask—no more need for supplications! You, *you* love me—I could crave no other boon of earthly good: this comprehends *all*. To go with you, heart joined to heart, and thought to thought, for life! Oh, life is short; it is taking wings—it flies: *but eternity is here!* You have led me to the hill-tops of human happiness. I am at peace: will you believe that, when I write so tumultuously? I can look now—oh, God bless you!—not through mists of uncertainty, into that future, which like a pleasant, shaded path spreads before me; for as I go on, henceforth I

may lean on your arm, and hear your voice, my beloved, saying what was never said for me before. I have found now all the fame, all the public for which I longed, in you, whose voice is better than a thousand—in you, whose love is my crown of glory.'

THE DEAD HEART.

ON her twenty-ninth birth-day, Evelyn Clause bent over the body of her lifeless son, and saw him, the eldest, the most beautiful, the last surviving of her four bright boys, placed in the coffin for burial. She watched, and even assisted in this sad duty, with a calmness that was almost frightful to behold ; and the hearts of those who witnessed the strange composure of the bereaved mother, trembled and fluttered into quiet, even while their hands were busied with arranging the robes of the dead ; the tears which gathered in their eyes fell not ; voices which had faltered as they strove to utter consolation or sympathy, grew strong and calm, suddenly ; even the grief of the nurse who had watched over Frederick from his infancy was hushed, and become voiceless, in the presence of the mother who stood so calm and silent beside her lifeless child.

When Clarence, the baby, died, it was far otherwise with her. Never was infant mourned with such wild, such exceeding sorrow as he. Night and day, through his illness, and after his death, the young mother clung to him, until at last they were compelled, by force, to remove her from the corpse when the funeral hour was come. It seemed then as though her tears would never cease to fall, and the mourning in which her form was enrobed, was not comparable with that natural mourning which enveloped her lovely face. Though three children still remained to her, it was of him who was lost that she held most constant remembrance ; it was of him, the affectionate little one who had never learned to express his love in words, who had never even once pronounced her name, that her stricken heart held con-

tinual thought ; and she who had lived all of life—real life that had been given her to live, in her children, trembled now, and looked with constant fear on her future : in them she had fixed her hope, and all her love—and behold, one already was taken !

Evelyn Clause wedded in her youth a “merchant prince,” who had already been twice married. They stood together at the altar a strangely-matched pair—she a very child in experience, and in beauty—and he worn in the world’s service, his hair already tinged with gray.

There were some witnessing this bridal who envied the new-made wife of Jesse Clause, for he was a man respected, and looked up to, in the world ; yet, he was one to whom it would seem the fancies or hearts of the youthful would not *naturally* incline. But he had money—and to the young creature, who, in the morning of her life, joyously consented to wed him, this was his sole recommendation, the *only* reason why she for a moment thought seriously of the offer. For Evelyn was the daughter of a poor family, (of a large family moreover,) and it had been sheer madness in her, and profound selfishness also, (so her generous heart assured her,) to decline so precious an opportunity of aiding her beloved ones of home. With the sincere earnestness and heartiness of youth, Evelyn strove to feel for her great benefactor more than mere gratitude, more than respect—she tried to *love* him. Poor child ! must she also learn that bitter lesson which they, who bind Poverty and Wealth thus together, must ever learn ?

As Evelyn came to know her husband’s nature, as his departed companions had, a wild suspicion would anon torture her that love, which she had vowed to maintain for him, was not that which she must strive for :—to preserve the reverence which she *had* for him, that respect, that friendliness, that gratitude, she must struggle. Ah, reader, no task like this can be given the bewildered young soul. It was then that Evelyn hushed, with an effort one must have made to fully appreciate, the indignant voice which Nature prompted her to raise against many a word he uttered, many a deed he wrought. She tried, and devoutly, with the charity that *thinketh* no evil, to forget the evidence he daily forced upon her of his ungenial and un-

worthy spirit ; and had this been a possibility, she had certainly succeeded in an effort so continuously and so faithfully made.

It was only after years had passed that the truth, which slowly but surely gathered its force, burst full upon her, and then the wife knew that the doom of solitariness, in the midst of splendor, was upon her. Urged by the "strong necessity of loving," from that time she folded her young children to her heart in a more idolatrous passion, and she made gods of them.

It was said by some, who inquisitively watched the fading of her face, and the sadness that revealed itself in her eyes, and in her voice, that Evelyn Clause was but reaping in bitter disappointment the fruit which she well deserved, for wedding where her heart could not by possibility have chosen its home. But no word from her lip ever added to the testimony of her face ; and it was not truth they spoke, who, looking on the apparent wreck of her happiness, told of the just reward of the covetous. If it had been a self-immolating sense of duty to her parents which led the young girl in her youth to wed with Jesse Clause, it was likewise a sense of justice, lofty, and holy, and stern, that prompted and constrained her to be to the husband all he should have been to her. The consciousness of his utter uncongeniality was with her constantly, yet she continued unweariedly faithful and devoted to him ; still, how often, how very often, her heart fainted and failed within her, need I tell ? Let the mortal who has looked for love and found *only* wealth—who has received a stone when he craved for the bread of life—answer.

But the reader has seen that entire bankruptcy was not forced upon the wife. In the children given her, the craving spirit of life found consolation ; in their unfolding natures her resigned heart roused to act ; the floods which had been fast settling into a Dead Sea, were arrested, were stirred again ; the clouds which were growing dark and threatening, assumed a sun-brightness once more.

Frederick, the first-born, was a lovely boy. In him the soul of his mother seemed personified ; and well might she look with joy on him who was the first in all the world to love her as she

had prayed one human being might. She was *satisfied* when his eyes fixed upon her, when his voice called her, when he followed in her footsteps like an attendant angel. She asked for no more of earth's good things, when his merry laugh rung in her ear—when his smiling, happy face was before her. With the other children born unto these parents, there was a mother's love born—a twin with each, a protector to each. It sprung up with them into such exultant life, that none who looked on Evelyn then could say, "she is unhappy." She became more beautiful even than she had been in her girlhood; and the peace, the continual harmony of her existence in those days proved that she was satisfied. In those young beings her own vanished youth was beautifully revived; in the sunshine that enveloped them she revelled; and the "light-joy" of perfect innocence and contentment, which streamed round them, reflected itself in and through her.

How terrible, then, was the awakening from this security of happiness, to an unimagined, an unthought-of sorrow! The immutability of her idols had seemed a thing unquestioned; she had never borne to think they might be shattered, she had *never* thought it. And, therefore, when death came and stood before her, and clasped her infant in her arms, she was frantic in her grief.

In her bereavement, the wife was indeed most lonely. During the several months in which, one by one, the three younger boys successively sickened and died, it was in Frederick's presence, in his voice alone, that she found any comfort. Her husband's tears did indeed fall with hers over the lifeless children, and with a heavy heart he followed them to their burial-place, but it seemed the loss of *heirs* that he most mourned. The children had never been to him what they had been to her. It was in the passionate, extravagant grief of the last surviving son, that she could best sympathise, and with *him* clasping her hand, when the third of her dead was laid in the grave, Evelyn felt that there was yet left on earth a comfort, and an exceeding joy. How infinitely precious he became, whoso has bound up all his hopes in this life, and all his deep affection, in one human being, will fully comprehend. He was her future. The rain-

bow of promise circled his glorious forehead, the sunlight of beauty was on his hair, and in his eyes, and in his graceful figure. When he was merry she was a very child in her gladness; his boyish grief made her as sorrowful; she seemed, indeed, an elder sister, rather than the mother of the lad; a gentle, fond, and proud companion, rather than an instructor or guide.

As year by year passed on, and still the child was spared, the trembling foreboding with which Evelyn had on every succeeding morrow clasped him to her breast, passed, and a sweet conviction that He who is most merciful and just in all his ways would grant long life to her darling, began to fill her mind. Then she built up high hopes for his manhood, she saw him pressing on in the loftiest paths of being, and how earnest was she in her endeavors to educate his heart! And a bright reward was given the mother for this labor of love, in the honest and noble spirit of the boy, in his virtue, in his filial reverence, and devotedness to both parents. Looking into his clear eyes, she read a joyful truth in them respecting the lofty character of her child.

"That he should die!" No warning of a calamity so awful was given in the healthful look, the ringing voice, and the winged footsteps of the boy; and indeed it was without any warning that Frederick was called away. There were but a few brief moments of solitary struggle in the night time that passed between the sleep of life, and the breathless slumber of the dead. And *she* was not there to hear his struggling, and his cry; to hear him, when the convulsion and the agony were over, murmur her name with his dying breath!

When the sunlight of morning streamed in at the window of his room, which was close adjoining hers, Evelyn stood by his bedside as she was wont, to welcome him back to day, and to her heart. But his greeting was for her ear no more: his smile was no longer to rival that sunshine which flooded the little chamber. Long, long continued was the vain effort to bring him back again, and frantic was the voice that rung through the solemnly silent room whose walls alone echoed his dear name; and all the while upon his young face was an expression inex-

pressibly tranquil and soft, which, while it bitterly mocked her despair, seemed to rebuke her sorrow.

As I have said, when Frederick was arrayed for the grave, and placed in his coffin, there was a wondrous calmness, a strange composure in the face, the voice, the manner of the mother. Yes; for in her also there had been a sickness unto death—she had wept the last tears, had passed the last agony. All indeed of *life* was over to her, and whatsoever of misfortune or suffering might yet befall her, would be without name, without reality to her. Of old, a bright, bewildering light had danced in her large eyes, gloriously brilliant when her heart was glad, mournfully sweet in the days of sorrow; that light was now entirely vanished, and it was chilling to the heart when she fixed her gaze on the things of earth which were now but chaos, or as void to her. Once, in her youth, and after her marriage indeed, her voice vibrated like a rich-stringed instrument with every emotion—but a cold, metallic ring was now in the calm cadence of her words.

Jesse Clause knew there was a change in his wife, but he could not understand it. When, after two years of mourning she laid aside the dreary garments, and went with him into the world to become like the mass with whom they mingled, only more brilliant, more courteous, more enchanting than the syrens there found, he was vastly proud of her, prouder than he had been when he wedded the timid, lovely girl. Freely he laid before her the wealth which made their dwelling-place to rival all others in splendor—and their magnificence became their fame. The life which Evelyn Clause now led was the same as is vouchsafed to many—and is lived in completeness by them; only her career as a fashionable woman was not marked or marred by littleness in any shape; she had no faults, that any could discover; she was generous and just, not only to the beggar at her gate, to the people in her employ, but also to her daily companions, and to her husband. Her tongue spoke no evil or malice; her counsel was never denied, when it was sought. *But Evelyn was without God, and without hope in the world.* To Him who had taken away the treasures that He gave, she never bowed her knee, or her soul; into His

earthly courts she never entered from the day when that last funeral went forth from her home! There were a multitude who admired, a multitude who envied her; but alas! she was of all about her most miserable: not because sick at heart—*her heart was dead*—but in that her affliction had driven her from Him who wounds us for His mercy's sake.

The life that she lived—what was it to her? It was all that she imagined she could live as the wife of Jesse Clause; and when Evelyn saw that in this career she had reached the standard that was perfection in her husband's eyes, she abated not one jot; she suffered him to find his pride in her, because for herself she knew there was nothing, *nothing* but an automaton existence, which, by reason of its nature, could not find in the world anything to charm or interest or rejoice it. To many there was something *too* cold in the supreme indifference, the always perfect calmness of the lady: but the most about her saw only the perfection of style in her manner and her raiment, and they labored hard to imitate that, which, alas! in Evelyn, was but the natural expression of one whose heart is dead; over whom the burial-service most solemn has been read, for whom, there is in this world, no possible resurrection!

So long as her husband lived, this was the wife's mode of life; but the old man died at last, and left his fortune, without a single reservation, to Evelyn. Then there was an instant change in her that *might* have betokened much to the wondering world. Among her husband's relatives and her own, in charities wide and almost numberless, that immense property was dispersed, and penniless the widow went from the world where she had suffered uncounted agonies, where she had shone a brilliant star, to the silence and obscurity of a convent.

Oh, reader, could I unseal to thee those years of convent-life that dawned, and passed over the head of Evelyn, could I tell thee of the prayers that day by day went up from the heart of the holy sisterhood for her through all those many years, a new fountain of tears would open in thy heart that could never be sealed again; bearing her in mind, how humbly, henceforth, nay, how thankfully, wouldst thou receive at thy Father's

hand the cup of grief, knowing that these light afflictions—bitter though they seem—are but for a moment!

It was a dreary life that Evelyn led—I had almost said it was a hopeless death she died—but that I may not say, that will I not believe; for they who entered her cell late one Sabbath morning, found her on her knees—and she was dead! and so her last breath *may* have been a prayer.

LITTLE ALVAH.

ONE stormy Saturday evening—"the last," some people said with an energetic thankfulness (or impatience) which did them infinite credit, for one might well have feared they had forgotten there was anything in their experience for which they should be *thankful*—on this stormy Saturday evening, of a very rainy week, a creature, whom one would *never* have taken for a man, at least in the dubious light of that dripping night, slowly, and umbrella-less, walked along the main street of a town that shall be "nameless *here*, forever more."

"He was a stranger in the place (in *our* place, I may as well state in the beginning, it was,) he had only arrived that afternoon, and this was his first perambulation. Lonely and disconsolate was he at heart, as he pursued that doleful ramble, for doleful and disconsolate were the streets, and the few who went hurrying "to and fro" through them, were still more mindless of him than it was in his nature to be of them: for, through the eyes of faith he saw in all of them neighbors, patrons, brothers, &c., and *they*, had they looked at him, would doubtless to themselves have pronounced him in unqualified terms, a contemptible vagabond. But his very insignificance spared them the committal of such injustice. As he continued his walk, such a sense of utter loneliness as none but strangers in strange places on rainy days, ever dreamed of, settled upon the heart of the forlorn little Alvah. He seemed to have not a thought of the storm, that was, by dint of perseverance, soaking his garments—nor of the mud, through which he ploughed his way. He could not rest, he must *forever* move on—but for this

necessity of his nature, we should have been able to introduce him to the reader under far pleasanter, at least far less miserable circumstances, as the inmate of the comfortable inn where he had left his worldly goods, with the intention of spending the Sabbath there. This, his restlessness, was the reason he went wandering, like an owl, through the increasing gloom, homesick, and heavy at heart, as can be imagined.

But his mental and bodily disquietude, roused this night to an unwonted degree, were productive for once of the best results to Alvah, for suddenly a strain of music burst upon his ear; he lifted his eyes, and saw that he was standing before a church, and that lights were streaming from its windows. The opened doors seemed inviting him to come in, and he needed no second invitation. He entered the outer doors of the sanctuary, and his face lighted up with a glad smile, which, as he passed within the place of prayer, was reverently subdued. Penniless as he was, almost, and friendless, too, had any one taken advantage of his bright, happy looks, and whispered reprovingly, "Stranger, what do you find to laugh at here?" he might have replied at once, since it was the feeling of his breast, with the great Stilling, "I have a very rich Father in Heaven." Let us leave him, for the present in the church—it was his only home.

At this time of his life, Alvah Coy was in his prime. His figure, what there was of it, was perfectly erect when standing *still*, or when seated. His enormous head was covered with a profusion of whity-brown hair, that, as yet, showed no intention of turning gray; his face, though pale and wrinkled, was evidently not indebted to length of days, or ill-health, for the pallor or the furrows—and it was adorned with that keen, "smart" expression, so peculiar to little men. Brief, limited as his bodily presentment was, he had an *up-look*, a cordial air, as though it was in him to take every man he met by the hand, and greet him in a kindly and neighborly way. There was no bend to his back, no drooping, as though he were very weary, and yet despaired of getting rest. One of his limbs was diseased: it was withering, or in some way losing its vitality, for when he walked, it was at every step drawn up with a sudden

jerk, which lent to his gait the oddest expression imaginable; he did not limp, and never used a cane, but one seeing him walk through the streets, had certainly fancied him an escaped figure from the adornments of a musician's hand-organ, and that he had carried off the secret of his movement with him. And so, without the music-power that heretofore had explained his motions, he presented a strange spectacle indeed. Provided he *was* an escaped image, suddenly, and in some unaccountable way endued with vitality, may not this account for the perfect passion for music which he always evinced? His soul was a soul of music, attuned to spiritual harmonies: he was of those "pure in heart" who are "blessed" by inward peace; who, thinking no evil, seem utterly incapable of producing it: who, loving all things, find in their own expansive hearts, satisfaction and reward; though their love, save for its influence on themselves, may be verily a vain sacrifice. He was, moreover, so true a believer in God, that he could "trust him for his grace," that "behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face:" and this was the *secret* of Alvah's inward peace.

His infirmity seemed to occasion the little man no bodily *pain* whatever; or if it did, pain was one of those light afflictions, which he held of small account. Such a man, and Christian, and philosopher, did Alvah prove himself to really be at heart; and you must read this man from that. It would be unjust to decide upon him, his nature, and habits, from the appearance of forlornness, despondency, and outer, as well as mental wretchedness he presented previous to entering the lighted church; the fact that music and light gushing from the house consecrated to sacred purposes, *could* so transform him, gives the needful key to his whole character.

Mr. Coy was a bachelor when he established himself in our village, and his purse being proportionate to his size, he contented himself with taking for lodgings a small room in the very vicinage of fashionable shoe-shops almost numberless—and there, to all intents and purposes, he lived. Of that one little apartment, he made breakfast room, dining room, boudoir, sanctuary, study, work-shop, and warehouse. Content, I said he was, with this arrangement! Once settled in his home, no

prince was ever happier in it, for Alvah was humblest of the humble, and a purer-souled mortal never drew breath; never was there one more entirely absolved, by nature, from ambition, and its promptings and persuasives, than he; his sole aim, through all his industry, seemed to be to keep himself at a distance, respectable, from the County Poor House, and to give to those poorer than he was. Content? Yes, indeed! he was willing, even without a thought of questioning about it, to take his stand as the very lowliest of the disciples of St. Crispin. Yet humble as he was—for humility of one kind is not of itself a remarkable, but on the contrary quite a common characteristic, our Alvah was one of the extraordinarily few men I have chanced to know, who filled a place beneath desert, and yet held to an exact conviction of his intrinsic worth which was not to be moved. Like *all* truly great men, he grew neither servile in his abasement, nor morose through mortified pride. He never, under the most adverse circumstances, would have felt himself to be anything less than a man, and that is what cannot be said of the great mass of worldly-unfortunate people. Therefore might Alvah be counted among the true philosophers. Those great blue eyes of his, peering forth so like an owl's from the darkness of the sunken sockets, over which the heavy brows cast an unnatural shade, never acquired an expression, and certainly nature had not endowed them with the power of expressing, a felt meanness. Ah! he was nevertheless a *noble man*, because some, as cruel as senseless, mocked him for his dwarfage, and his infirmity; or, because, compelled, by the verdict of *incapacity*, rendered by the most unscrupulous of all courts, that of "Public Opinion," to betake himself to the very lowliest place among respectable cobblers.

The little man's personal appearance, and his poverty, were fearful odds against which to work, in a community appreciative as ours. But Alvah struggled on with them, neither forsaking himself, nor blushing for his poverty's sake, and he met his reward. Those who could not patronize him in the way of trade to the extent of their kind hearts' desire, by reason of their own poverty, understanding his pure and hearty Christianity, and seeing in him the elements which, in more for-

fortunate men, are the elements of truest respectability, resolved to serve him in their own way, and on the approach of a certain election they took him into solemn consideration, and then, all at once, Alvah found himself in office! No endeavor or ambition of his own led to this good result, he did not attain to the honor by morally unlawful or unjust trickery, and as was expected, his official service was fulfilled in a manner worthy all acceptance and praise.

But wherein was it, do you imagine, that Alvah was promoted?—it was to be a doorkeeper in a house of God! And no other station on this earth could he have entered with so much delight, and filled with so much satisfaction to himself and others. One grand reason for his own joy, was, that in this circle he had found his *domestic* circle, his brothers, and sisters, his home, and he had found all this nowhere else. The congregation was not a rich one, and he loved it for that reason, as he would otherwise have never dared to love it. Its service was simple, and with both heart and understanding he could join in it—there was no ostentation, or parade, or pride about it; he never knew anything of those sensations, which, had it been any other sort of church than just that it was, he would surely have felt—as though it were a fine place, a very grand place, and beautiful, but no place for humbling the soul before God with undistracted thought. It was no scene of pomp, and pride, and luxury, that simple little church. And for this great reason he loved it. Laughed at as he might be in the street, or even in *the sanctum*, his own shop,—he found in his church all the respect due to a brother, yielded him. No one laughed at him there—no one pushed him aside—no one said to him, or looked at him the idea, “stand by”—“I am holier;” and for that he loved this humble place of prayer. He loved it for its choir of fervent singers, for one sweet voice which had subdued, and melted, and calmed his heart, the night when a stranger and lonely, he entered the church, and for the first time heard it. That voice—I will not say how it haunted him, and soothed, and encouraged him many a day, when no other outward influence had such power!—And Alvah loved the pastor of the church, the good and affectionate man, who

faithfully taught to his people the Lord Jesus, and Him *crucified*. He loved all connected with that house of Sabbath and week-day prayer, with the love of a child for its mother, of the lonely, for his one friend—that sanctuary contained within its borders all the objects of his tenderest love—it was the great centre of attraction for his soul.

There was no bell attached to the belfry of the little blue church; Alvah's duty was therefore not to *call* the people together, but to prepare for their reception. This work of sweeping, dusting, airing, arranging, &c., was always admirably performed, with the most perfect quietude and diligence, and no occasion for reproof or advice was ever found, during his whole, long term of office. But it was as pew-opener, as the official of church hours, that his virtues shone forth most brightly and conspicuously. Never shall I forget the quiet happiness he evinced during the time of a great revival in his pastor's congregation; never shall I forget him, in the fulfilling of his onerous duty of seating the immense concourse, which in that particular time of excitement gathered together as "anxious inquirers," or curious listeners and spectators, in the place of prayer.

The eager and intense watchfulness, which spoke from his remarkably solemn face, as he took his stand in one of the aisles, to watch the opening of the doors, the rapid and uninterrupted examination of the features of those who entered, his instant detection of new faces, the springing movement with which he would almost *leap* forward to welcome the coming worshipper, or mere looker-on, the quiet and easy manner in which, spite of his infirmity, he contrived to move along, directing the way of strangers to the best seats possible—the reverential manner in which he guided the aged, the kindness and sympathy with which he pointed out places to the young, I well remember, but cannot fitly describe. Then there was certainly no expression of the "human face divine" that could equal the perplexity of his look, as when by degrees the small church became filled, he would look about and around him, proving to his own heart's content, as well as that of persons still more nearly concerned, the utmost capacity of each and every pew.

His solemnity and reverence, deep, and unaffected, and affecting too, as it must surely have proved to those who could understand it, had for us young folks, I remember, a resistlessly comic look. Ah! *you* should have seen the little old figure, the parody of a man, as in prayer time he would take his stand near the door, in the aisle, his great head bent low, his large and work-discolored hands spread over his pale face, his bright, blue eyes peering through the fingers constantly: and then, if the door at either hand gave but the slightest token of an outsider, you should have seen his sudden start, as if he had received a strong electric shock, and then with what imperturbable gravity he would busy himself with finding a seat for the late comer;—the perplexed glances he would cast around him, when to find a seat seemed a moral impossibility, was one worth going far to meet! And worth a glance it was to see little Alvah, when relieved from these duties he would finally enter his own slip near the pulpit, and give himself up wholly to the religious exercises. With what devout ears,—and because he listened in a frame of mind so thankful and glad, the hearing was no less an act of service than that the singers rendered,—with what devout ears did he listen to the singing choir and congregation, to that one voice of all others, which was as the “voice of the charmer” to him, charming wisely: with what attentive mind and heart he listened to the preacher’s words—there was a spirit of pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, in the very way of his listening!

After entering on this office of public service, Mr. Coy, for many reasons, judged it best, and his new and warm-hearted friends fully concurred with him in the opinion, for him to change his place of residence to the basement of the church, and there, in the shadow of the holy place, he pursued all his quiet avocations.

The curious spectacle afforded in that little, faded, old creature’s life, a bachelor too, keeping house all alone by himself, was a sight novel enough to attract the curiosity of every child in that neighborhood, and many and many a time did we haunt him with our presence and company, never once *realizing* the idea, enough in itself to have sent the majority of us off pell-

nell in greatest confusion, could we have in true proportions conceived of the fact, that Alvah *was* a man, and a regular *business* man, and not a good natured little fellow, *playing work*.

I have never, since his day, encountered a man like him. He seemed to have the very heart of a child. He entered into every thought, and curiosity, and desire of childhood, just as thoroughly as though that cheerless, dismal basement, were indeed his play-house; that lap-stone, and the tools with which he hammered away, his toys, and himself nothing more than a make-believe worker. Yet we received Alvah for our judge and jury—he was the counsel and defender for all the wronged; not one of us, when in trouble, ever counted on his good advice and assistance, if that was really needed, in vain. He was the most impartial judge—always ready to be interested, to reprove or to praise, to defend or condemn, just as soon as he was acquainted with the merits and points of a case. There was never a mortal more generous in hearing, more upright in decisions, than he. His valor in making and recording decisions was of the truly heroic kind, nothing could *buy* a good opinion of him—yet his tender heart was ever open to conviction, and when he had inadvertently wronged another, he was swift to make ample confession and recompense.

Sometimes he had unpleasant dealings with older, stronger, and (strange to say) more perverse children than we, and I never shall forget the indignation to which our hearts gave vent one morning, when a group of us, under pretence of a shoe to mend, went to his shop.

We found him silent and sad; he evidently looked on us with suspicion—and nothing we could say was effectual in drawing him into a conversation, which we thought very strange, for always heretofore he had been swift to join us in our talk. When he had finished his slight task, he gave the shoe to the child who had brought it, quietly received the few coppers of charge, and then turned away from us. We looked at one another in astonishment, we could not understand it; as we turned to go, quite crest-fallen at his “what are you waiting here for?” one of the boys with us said,

"Mr. Coy, what *is* the matter? are you mad at us?"

We all turned back then with one consent, and another asked,

"Yes, what makes you turn us off? we haven't done anything to hurt your ——"

"Feelings," said one of the girls, finishing the sentence for him.

"Perhaps he's had bad news," quietly suggested a fourth.

I think we must have shown by our looks, conclusively, that we were really troubled, for when he had scanned our faces searchingly, one after the other, he seemed relieved, and said,

"No, children, I'm not mad at *you*."

He spoke sadly, and though he tried his best to look up at us cheerfully, his smile was not a happy one.

"What *is* the matter?" asked the first boy, who had ventured to speak.

"Nothing," said Alvah, briefly.

"Yes, there is!" we all exclaimed, in a breath. "Somebody's gone and done something hateful to you; what is it?"

"Don't you really know anything about it?" asked he, looking at us anxiously, and as though he were going to cry.

"No—no—we certainly don't know a word; *has* anybody done anything to you?"

"When I went to bed last night," he said, with a shudder, and hesitating, as though afraid we would laugh, "I found somebody had thrown water into my bed—it was perfectly soaked."

"Oh, what an abominable shame!"

"Outrageous!"

"The beast!"

"How cruel!"

"The devil it must have been!" exclaimed we, and our indignation was not feigned.

What a perfect delight the poor little fellow was in as he heard these exclamations, and saw the honest wrath depicted on the young faces around him!

"I tell, you what!" exclaimed the oldest among us, a boy of

about twelve, "I'll find out who it was that served you such a trick, and the person, the rascal ! shall pay dear for it."

"Oh, no ! it's of no consequence *now*," said Alvah, cheerfully, and earnestly. "Don't think of doing anything about it. I'd rather you wouldn't speak of it. Promise you'll keep shady. I was only afraid it was some of *you*, and I didn't want to think so mean of you as that you'd delight in tormenting me, that's a fact !"

"No, indeed !" we said ; and if our protestations of respect and love were somewhat exaggerated, they were at least spoken in all sincerity, and we proved it to him conclusively, for we did not leave him that day till the forlornly wet bedding was completely dried, and every preparation made that could be made in such a room, with such aids as there presented, for his comfortable rest in the coming night.

This trick was not the last, by a great many, that was cruelly played on poor Alvah—he was a standing joke for more than one vicious idler—but our friend never thought of suspecting *us* again, as indeed he had no need.

Alvah never could discover who these active enemies, or perhaps not so much enemies as thoughtless troublers, were, and this was strange, for with such eyes as he had in his head, one would not have imagined that anything he wished to discover would long remain a mystery to him. He had the keenest, and by far the most penetrating eyes, I ever beheld—it seemed as though he could understand at a glance what his audience was thinking of—yet, excepting in power of penetration, and in judgment, which perhaps would have utterly failed him in dealing with anything more powerful than a child's mind, he was exactly as a child. But, as the child regenerate ; in entering the kingdom of God on earth, by faith and prayer, his child-nature had been perfected, purified, its faults of passion, hastiness, its ignorance, gave place for the "life of God in the soul"—he was pure in heart—meek—merciful—a peace-maker—and on all of whom thus much may be said, a four-fold blessing was by our Lord pronounced : spiritually he *did* see his Heavenly Father—in the highest sense he did inherit the earth, as a ransomed child of Faith all things were his, and he was Christ's, who is God's ! as a man merciful,

and truly so, he rejoiced in the hope of mercy at the hand of the All-merciful, whose favor is better than life :—and in his capacity of peace-maker, ah ! how much more was he than we even dreamed, a child of God, and so the angels knew him !

Poor Alvah ! excepting in a spiritual sense, there was far more of the bitter than the sweet mingled in his cup—the sorrow of love even was not spared him ; the *sorrow*, I say, for the only shadow of its joy which surrounded him was proved a dark one, and the “noxious dew,” instead of the heavenly sunlight of love, was all that fell upon him.

Ann White was a communicant in the church of which Alvah was sexton : she also was an official there, a singer in the choir ; indeed the very singer whose voice had so charmed him—the “sweet singer” in this particular “Israel,” whose song had soothed him when he was in momentary darkness and gloom, with the thought of “light in the dwelling.” With those warm, cheering, and genial rays, which streamed from the church windows that dismal, first night of his arrival in our village, she was always associated—she was much in his thoughts—and thus was she near, yes, and dear to him. This girl was young and pretty ; and when Alvah heard and looked upon her, he suffered himself to perceive the fact, that his eyes and heart were not, as he had ever consoled himself with believing, stone-blind, and totally unconscious to the beauty of woman. The calm, self-sustaining good sense and innocence of his nature, had heretofore befriended him—he had always felt conscious that his dealings with fair women must be strictly of a professional nature—he must only deal with *soles* of leather ; though they to him were angels, he to them, of course, was nothing but a cobbler. And it was so, also, that he had looked upon this young girl at first—she surely was no more than all the rest of womankind had been ; yet he felt more grateful to her than he had ever before felt to any of her sex, and solely because she sang so sweetly, for he counted it almost a condescension on her part to sing for him, as it seemed to him she did expressly. Who is there that cannot enter into and understand *this* feeling ? Blessed be God for the sweet gift of song, by

which so many are able to effect a great work of salvation, sanctification, and reconciliation!

It was only by imperceptible degrees that Alvah's heart got the better of his reason, at last. *He* knew not how or why it was that a new longing came into his soul, a new sensation of loneliness, a new ambition to labor, and to be *known* as a workman. He was not conscious that the longing and desire had a meaning hidden. In his innocence he had no thought of escaping the temptation that offered itself, indeed he knew not if it were a temptation.

Though he never went into any sort of society, and so stood no chance of meeting with her thus, a desire to be near her, to see and hear her, impelled him to be always in the church, at every singing school or meeting she would be likely to attend, even if his own duties did not require his presence; and there, unnoticed, unseen even, he might listen to her, and lose himself in the melody of her voice, and never dream that Love was mastering him. And so, with equal unconsciousness he would sit in his gloomy workshop, sewing or hammering away from morning till night, and one who did not know him thoroughly would never have suspected that even those eyes, great as they were, had a double power of vision, which enabled him to scan the face of every passer-by on his side of the street; but if those orbs chanced to fix on her, the fact, to the initiated, would have sufficiently announced itself by solely observing the changes in the expression of his face—his hands and his tools would fly faster and faster, and the heart's bright sunshine would illumine his countenance. She had then never spoken one word to him—had never stood within the doors of his shop in the basement, and of course he could not dream that Love was mastering him!

But at last one day she did come, and alone too, bringing with her some work from her mistress and herself for him to do, and while he was accomplishing the task, she waited. The young girl was not in the least degree troubled with diffidence, and the last thing in the world that would have "set her back," was the attempt at conversation with her which Alvah made. They were members of one congregation, she held a higher office than he—for he only prepared the place for worship, while

she assisted in the service—and *why* should she be afraid to speak with that poor little wretch, the halt sexton and cobbler?

Alvah had long and most earnestly desired to speak with her; he wanted just to relieve himself by telling her how much he liked her singing, and by thanking her for singing so well and so faithfully in that choir, when many of the more fashionable churches would be proud to have her for a singer. He found Ann so agreeable, and withal so communicative, that it proved to his amazement the easiest thing in the world for him to express his feelings of gratification and interest in a gallant way. Then he spoke with her of the church and the minister, and her pious expressions of attachment for these, *his* best friends, delighted him. The cobbler worked with more difficulty than usual that day, her voice seemed to act like a charm on his hands, imploring him to not make such desperate haste, she was not eager to be gone.

When the work *was* finally done, the girl would fain have paid him; but this, *save* for the task performed for her mistress, he absolutely refused; he would not take *her* wages, he said; she had paid him over and over a hundred times, for all that he could do for her, in the pleasure derived from her sweet voice, and he made her promise that he should have all her work in his line to do. And Ann let him have his own way about it, and more than his own will, truth to say!

It was not long before the girl became well aware of the conquest she had made—this happened before Alvah could have said *as* much. While he, week after week, was rejoicing in the happy, self-deceiving idea that the interest he felt in her was occasioned solely by her voice of sweet song, *she* knew he was as much “in love” as man *ever* was. And when she knew it—to her shame be it written—she made not one generous endeavor to disenchant him, or to make him less the slave to his passion for music, as he would have called it, but to his passion for herself, as she *knew* it was.

And why?

He knew, poor fellow, when called upon one day, some months after his personal acquaintance with Ann White, for his

accustomed contributions to the missions abroad, and for the poor at home. Once he had joyfully contributed of his little store to these charities; but now, alas! he was spoiled—next to ruined! He had lavished his earthly all on a creature of clay, and had nothing, literally nothing, but tears and a repentant heart to give to those who asked in the name of God. *She* had asked in the name of love, by appeals his heart could not withstand; she had virtually, in his own knowledge, robbed him.

She had led him on step by step, how, I hardly know; but he was at last her ardent and acknowledged lover—her betrothed. And then it was for her, first of all, that he labored. He lavished his earnings on her. She was very fair, and was beautiful when adorned with the fine things which for herself she could not buy, but which her heart coveted. Many a gift of beauty and real value he had placed upon this idol; but, alas! adorn her as he might, she had not a true heart within—she was false, selfish, and vain, and it should therefore have been a surprise to none, when she in the end suddenly dispelled his illusion, laughed at him in the face, that he should have been so deluded, and mocked him when he desperately strove to set off her heartless ridicule, by repeating the promise she had made to marry him. She had deceived him far as she would—had accepted, extorted, and profited to the utmost by his gifts, for another suitor, attracted by the beauty, so well adorned by the fine garments bought with Alvah's hard earnings, in turn became her accepted lover.

The shock occasioned by this discovery, which she herself mockingly and shamelessly made, was almost too much for the disappointed and deceived Alvah. Indignant that such a swindling process should have been carried on against him, he had at first but one desire, to punish the graceless, "gay deceiver" in the way she surely deserved, by bringing her into a court of justice, and procuring for her there a public condemnation, at least. But his charity, which was little less than sublime, his *pity* for the mean soul that had rejoiced in its deception and extortion, got the better of his wrath ere long, and the suit which he had instituted was withdrawn. His anger went over as a

heavily-charged cloud; the storm was not permitted to break on her; the fury of it recoiled, it fell back, spreading desolation and anguish on his own heart only!

He let her go her way almost without one reproach of bitterness. He suffered her to shine in the raiment he had bought for his betrothed, with money earned in long hours of hard toil. He permitted her to marry another, and neither hindered nor molested her. And on earth our poor Alvah was never avenged. He died before righteous judgment was visited on her—he would not rejoice, if he were living now, to know what He has performed who promised, “I will repay.” Vengeance *has* overtaken her, while he, the tired and weary, sleeps. And it is just this fact, of the unqualified misery, the poverty, sickness, and multiplied misfortune, which has overtaken the girl, that suggested the record of little Alvah. She has learned already, with what wisdom she worked evil, that good might come—she has suffered more than he, diseased, forlorn, and poor, was permitted to suffer in his forty years of life—and miserable as Ann is, she has not yet drained the cup of bitterness!

Alvah lived but a few years after his heart's great and cruel disappointment. I am not aware, however, that his death was at all hastened by sorrow; yet it is not improbable that the moral deformity hidden by that fair mask, gave his vital energies, his spirit, and earth-nature a shock, from which, in this world, it could never recover. I know that *after* her desertion he was a “sadder man,” and that the poor, ruined sexton went finally with weariness to the eternal rest. But this I know, moreover, that one now standing by his grave, may say with doubled emphasis, with holy hope and thankful gladness,—“Pax Vobiscum, Alvah!”

HEAD AND HEART WORSHIP.

“Keep yourselves from idols.”

PELEG OTTLEY had two children; Jonas and Rebecca, they were called.

The man was a respectable farmer, in moderate circumstances—that is, he owned a good wife and a well-stocked farm, a very fair reputation for honesty and decency, and the two children above named: but he was, nevertheless, a disappointed man; what he accomplished, ever fell short of his hopes, and so, in middle life, he was about as far from the realization of his boyhood’s dreams, as dreamer ever was.

When the rough, coarse-featured, “scrubby” farmer, found his castles proving, one after another, of the most unsubstantial, unsatisfactory air, and he himself and his wife remaining precisely the same hard-working, pains-taking, comfortable farmers that they were twenty years before, *barring* the very considerable increase of fortune, his hopes and desires (as he could not himself find out the way to make a show in the world,) naturally turned towards his children, and his great wish became, that they might be prosperous and happy, and more honored and sought after, in and by the world, than their parents had been. And so, after all, he would find a triumph in his children! Rebecca, the dear little child, should be a lady, and Jonas should be a scholar and a gentleman. Yes, that was it! people should have occasion to know something about his children! And Peleg, as that “thought struck him,” buried his hard hands in the thick

locks where the gray was fast conquering the ebon, and dreamed, and dreamed away.

To this end, of world-progress, Jonas and Rebecca went regularly to school in the winters, and at an early age, the boy was sent to a village academy, from which Peleg's farm was but a few miles distant, and when he was sufficiently advanced in his studies, Jonas went to college. And the daughter, Rebecca, it was not necessary, Peleg said, for girls to learn so much and to study so hard as boys; they could appear *better* at a *less expense* and trouble; and so, in due time, she had a six months' schooling in a neighboring seminary, at the end of which term she returned home to the old farm-house, for a wonder, quite unspoiled and unwon by the glimpse of village gaiety she had caught. A very pretty, and good, and reasonable young creature she was.

Jonas was, from his childhood, what is commonly termed "a smart boy," quick at learning, and of great promise, so the school-master said. And, oh, how proud the old folks were of him, when he went home to spend his last vacation, after having graduated honorably at college—it was his last vacation, for now it was decided upon that he should soon depart for a city, not far distant, there to study law, for Jonas must be a professional man. His mind had not been instructed and educated so highly, merely that he might subside into a common farmer, a feeder of cattle, a sower and reaper of grain, no indeed!

The doting old grand-parents averred that Jonas would be an honor to the name of Ottley, and hesitated not to proclaim in the boy's ear, a firm belief that he would at least be president, some day—and the neighbors, they were very sure, for the most part, that he might be anything he would; as for little Lucy Smith, she seemed to think him about the most wonderful youth in the world as he was, and from her innocent heart, she wondered why Jonas should want to go away from all his friends, to strive to make himself heard of, when all the country-people round about thought so well of him, and honored him so much already.

There were a great many tears shed in Farmer Ottley's house, when the day for Jonas' departure finally came round; for in three long years, the boy was not to return home, and the

thoughts which naturally arise, and sorrowfully intrude in such moments, of death or sickness, of temptation and disappointment, troubled every mind except that of the eager youth.

"You must write to us every week, my boy," said the father, "we shall think of you *so* often: try and be steady, and you'll *have to try*—don't be led away by every breeze—whoever prospers in this world works hard, and keeps steady at his business—you'll find that out when you go to lawing it."

"You'll be a man when you come back, Jonas," said the mother, trying to smile—"it will seem a great while first—be sure you don't let us hear anything bad of you, and as grandpa' says, you'll be one of their great ones yet."

Rebecca, the young sister, the quiet, loving girl, was the only one who had bidden the boy remember that there was something besides honor to win, and respectability to maintain. She had said to him, when walking with him alone, the evening before he left home, "I dread your going away this time, more than I ever did, Joe. You will be so *free* to what you have been before, and I know there must be danger when one goes into a city to live among wild young men. I know you're not so wild as some—I don't think you're *at all* wild—but it seems so dreadful when a young person sets out to seek his fortune in the world. And, dear Joe, do listen with patience just while I say this—study, but don't study too hard, thinking you are going to be famous, and all that. Grandpa' calls you president, and I've seen your eyes flash sometimes, as much as to say, 'I will be great.' Just think how old and worn a man must be before he can have power and great wordly honor; *don't* forget yourself, and strive for fame more than anything else: if you make *that* your idol, I shall fear for you, because it's not right to seek first and always the good things of earth."

And Jonas listened attentively to the words of the young girl, and he kissed her when he answered, "Never fear, Becky, I'm not going to make a slave of myself for ambition's sake, or anything else. If fame comes to me, well and good, but if not——" and the sentence was ended with a careless snatch of a merry tune, that quieted the sister's fears,

Jonas Ottley went to the city, and was articled clerk in the office of two distinguished practitioners. It was very fortunate for the young man, that there was a vacancy at the time of his application—for they who thus became his companions, were really gentlemen, who had the spirit, as well as the name of gentlemanliness—and they set him an example of diligent, untiring activity.

The great and important business entrusted to “the firm,” the deserved celebrity the lawyers had acquired, and the wealth and honorable station they had attained, solely by their own exertions, aroused all the ambition of Jonas, and all the hopes which the words of parents and grand-parents had helped to foster. Therefore it was not in any way remarkable that Jonas Ottley should have resolved on plans which it would take a lifetime to accomplish, ere he had been in the city one month: before he was as old as his employers, he would be as honored and well-known as they! Very few were the acquaintances he made, and they were invariably among the studious, respectable, and moral class. To make a sensation in *society*, to win the admiration and love of women, was not now his desire, and there was no danger that Peleg’s son would ruin himself by dissipation, for temptation to all sensual indulgence was unheeded by him. Ambition, and not a passion for self-gratification, was aroused; there was far more need for fear that *that* spirit would prove the dangerous Tempter.

The three years of study passed rapidly away, and cheering were the tidings, which, from time to time, reached the young aspirant’s home in the country, of the studious habits and respectable progress of dear Jonas. Some of the country people had been occasionally to the city: they had seen how handsome and tall the young man was grown, how gentlemanly his address was. Kindly had he greeted them, and the old folks’ eyes glistened when the returned travellers went on to say how tenderly Jonas had asked after his father and mother, and little Becky, and the old grand-parents—though the youth had proved to them all, in his frequent letters, how far he was from forgetting them, (but the loving can never too often receive assurances of the affection of those they love, can they?) Yet, by far the

best of all tidings—yes, better to old Peleg, and Nancy, his wife, than the thought of his beauty and affectionate remembrance—the son was coming up to their high expectation in point of talent, and in progress! Approving words had been spoken of him oftentimes by the older lawyers, he was held in high repute among the young men of business and steady habits—all this fell like balm on the dreaming old soul, Peleg; and he dreamed the faster, and he wished from his heart that he had now some better, or more serviceable homage, to lay before his son, Jonas, than mere love; and while the father dreamed, the mother blessed her boy, and Becky prayed for him—and grandpa' hurra'd, with fresh impetuosity, for his president.

There was a family altar in Peleg Ottley's house. There, every morning and evening, the parents and daughter went to yield their homage and best love to God! Stay, should I say that? Could He, who will not receive homage that is not of the heart, and undivided, could He have been satisfied with the offerings there made? Why, they had no *idols*. Those smoke-stained images, which, ever since Rebecca's childhood, had stood on the little parlor-mantel, were not images of worship and gods! that household did not bow down to senseless forms of wood and gold—they made no sacrifices to "stocks and stone!" they did not pretend to Bhudhism, Lamaism, or any other *such* ism—their minds were very clear of superstition, they acknowledged but one Lord; the Head Homage most assuredly they gave, and the father and grandfather were deacons in the church, and had for years and always acknowledged the eternal truth, "there is no god *but God*." People, without a shadow of hesitation, called them good, consistent Christians—far be it from me to say they were not, but do you think it true that they had, and adored, "no god *but God*?"

Rebecca Ottley was a fair young girl, amiable and loving, who lived more for others than herself, or, rather, she found her highest enjoyment, her perfect happiness in living for others, and in exerting herself to secure their comfort and welfare, and such natures never fail to find, if in no other way than in their own exertions, an abundant reward.

Her education, though by no means so finished as that of her brother, was very good, and her mind had been improved, strengthened, and refined, by much reading. Vigorous, active, independent, in the popular sense of the words, she certainly was not. But Rebecca was a quiet, sensible girl, who honored her parents, loved nature, and thought her Jonas a king, yea, verily, *a king* among men. Unsuspecting, cordial in her attachments, impressed with a firm conviction that all people do to the very best of their ability, and also confident in the thought that there is much more of good in the world than people are, for the most part, disposed to acknowledge, she was as guileless and estimable a maiden, as one, in this world of sin and abundant corruption, will often chance to see.

It was no very great marvel, certainly, that a youth so susceptible as William Mason, should think upon her with more than common interest. And what of William Mason? Only this. A very rich old gentleman, heartily sick of the

“Unceasing toil, and endeavor,”

of his city life, had purchased a splendid farm adjoining Peleg Otley's, and there with his wife and child, the said William had come to pass the remainder of his days.

An acquaintance was soon formed between the practical and amateur farmer, and ere long between the wives and children of the two families, and before the first winter of their acquaintance was nearly ended, it became evident that a very intense kind of friendship had been contracted between Rebecca and William.

It must surely have been the attraction of dissimilarity which united these two; for William Mason was neither handsome, nor graceful, nor particularly amiable, neither was the amount of his book-learning by any means amazing, and one listening to the common-places which he usually made the vehicles for expressing his thoughts, would not have called the young man astonishingly eloquent. Nevertheless—all lovers will understand what *that* means—Rebecca loved the man sincerely, devotedly; in as full, ay, in a fuller degree, than Scripture commandeth, *better* than father or mother, or even brother, better,

or even *as* she loved life, for through him existence was made to her a thousand times more beautiful. Of course the young girl was not, on *that* account, a weak woman, but it was singular how forgetful she became of the fact that she had eyes and ears of her own, and *not* singular that this homage rendered to his visuals and tympanum, was just the adoration most acceptable to the lover. In his estimation, "the beauty of wedded life lies in the dependence of the wife upon the husband"—dependence not only for the supply of all physical wants, but dependence also for the spiritual sustenance!

Oh, misery! if the wife find in a time of dire necessity, when wearied with a long march through the desert of life, that she has depended for refreshment and sustaining power on a broken cistern that holds no water! Oh, sorrow that "hath no name," if, after long-continued hope, she is constrained to lie down of exhaustion, and perish a very beggar, forced to feel that the only source from whence she ever sought aid is utterly inadequate.

William Mason and Rebecca Ottley were married, and Peleg and his wife remained at home alone; but though both the lights were now removed from the old farm-house, darkness was not there. The prosperity of their children was a great soother to the parents, and a goodly comfort in their loneliness; their son-in-law pleased them, and the prospects of Jonas brightened with every year. In due time he also married. Not the little Lucy Smith whom he had always called his wife in the days when he went with her and Rebecca to the district school, though Lucy was still unmarried, and working like a slave in the farm-house where she lived with the childless people who, by the way, had quite forgotten that *they* were ever children.

A city lady of high connections, poor, but beautiful, high-spirited, witty, wilful, and brilliant, was the woman the young lawyer chose to share his rising fortune. The course of Jonas was a *naturally* upward one; he met with few impediments. Already he had a name in the city where he had made his home, for being studious, careful, and attentive in business

habits; he had the confidence of the clients who employed him, and it was exceedingly well placed.

But with his success the young man's desire increased. The demands of fashion he paid little heed to, yet to himself he acknowledged it would be fine to have a splendid establishment, a dazzling wife, and to give as noble entertainments as others. Wealth of itself he valued little; wealth as a means of advancement, was quite another thing, so it was that the labors of his profession began to have a twofold interest in his eyes. Fame and riches! ah, talk not of Moloch! Gold to buy the homage of fools! Fame to buy the respect of the world—and for these

"To waste the light of day,
Night's better beauty, feeling, fancy, thought,
All that he had, and was, for *these*—for naught!"

Indeed, for naught!

Jonas had much changed since the time when he left his country-home to study in the city. Constant endeavor, unceasing exertion had chilled his heart, and contracted its generous impulses—he had learned to look with scornful eyes on the little, humble joys of life. Week in and week out, he was constantly in his office plodding, or in the court-room stirring all hearts by his eloquence—influencing and swaying the opinions of men in cases where life and death were at issue. He had it in his power to mould the wills of determined men, to convince the stubborn, to subdue his opponents, and it was not strange that, as time went on, the lust of power should have usurped the place of love, that strength of hard will should have gained the mastery over tenderness, that Jonas, the great advocate, should have become an ungenial husband, a stern, cold, forgetful father.

Agnes Ottley was very proud of her husband's great talents, she gloried in his growing and high reputation—yet she did not make him the idol of her heart. She was saved from this sin, however, not by her conviction of the moral wrong attending such kind of worship—not because she acknowledged no earthly god—simply because he had chilled her love, and stifled her devotional impulse towards him, by his coldness—because he

would not be the sunshine and glory of her spirit's life—because he had forced upon her the conviction that there were things he sought after more devoutly than her happiness, and his own, and their children's; and because these very things to her seemed rightly of no worth, no life, save what a false-guiding imagination had given them.

The children of Jonas Ottley never approached him with that confidence which constitutes the beauty and the abiding strength of the union between parent and child. As they grew up they learned to seek in their mother a protector and shield against their stern father, and she, as sadly wanting as they in the confidence which springs from a mutual trust and affection, at last came to appear in their eyes not only a mother, but a confidant in all their faults, and wrong-doings. When they were suffering from their father's displeasure, the boys were furnished by her with money and consolation, for she commiserated them, and thought their punishment for offences oftentimes heavier than was just. When these sons' demands became too frequent and too great, as it is needless to say they speedily did, there was one way in which they might always be checked and silenced, by threatened exposure to the father. Thus between a fear for one parent, and an almost disrespect for the leniency of the other, which was the natural consequence of such domestic government, the misery of that household was not far from its completion. When confidence, "the key-stone of the arch," is gone—when love, the sustaining pillar, is broken, what ruin of domestic peace and confidence may not be looked for? God have mercy on all such households!

In his own childhood, the heart-affections of Jonas Ottley had been as tender and as free from all that tends to corrode or harden the heart, as his sister's had been. But their parents had never thought to incite *her* to ambitious exertion—they had never thought of bidding her, as they had to all intents bidden him, to labor above all things for wealth. She had been suffered to live chiefly for love—her heart had never been closed with unseemly haste against all that keeps the soul alive to the really lofty, good, and true.

Mahometanism is doubtless preferable to Bhudism; the

worship Rebecca gave her husband was not so soul-destroying, probably, as that her brother yielded to his idols, and yet—no matter what!

The youngest of Jonas Ottley's sons died in infancy, the remaining two grew up to manhood, talented, but without an idea of cultivating or improving their talents—dissolute and unprincipled. Their mother, by necessity, became a leader of fashion—she was forced by her own miserable domestic life, and by her husband's prominent position, into the gay world, and there her vanity and innate love of display were all aroused, and so it came to pass that in her prime of life she outshone all her compeers; there was not in the great city a woman so charming, so brilliant, as the wife of Jonas Ottley.

But, in the midst of those parents' honor and fashionable publicity, a wo, that had been many years in gathering its strength, fell upon them; the fame of the great lawyer could not avert it, nor could the uncommon spirit, grace, and beauty, of Agnes Ottley, turn it aside. The sorrow did not come to them in the shape of death—that, being the "common lot" of all born into the world, they could have endured, either coldly or patiently—it did not come in the shape of loss of fortune, that had not so deeply afflicted them, or dismayed them—for neither the husband or wife were essentially sordid, mercenary beings. Poverty or death they could have borne better than dishonor, and it was dishonor that was forced upon them by their eldest son.

He had rushed headlong in the career of licentiousness, and dissipation of every kind—and at last had forged bills to a great amount on his father, not to pay his debts, which were contracted everywhere, but to secure him the means to elope with a woman who was both a wife and mother, an opera dancer! who, destitute of all refinement or mental beauty, had fascinated the young man, and lured him towards destruction.

There was a sad scene in Mr. Ottley's beautiful dwelling that night, when the father, having discovered the forgery and the shameful departure of his son, returned to break the intelligence of his flight to his wife.

He found Agnes alone. She was just returned from the

opera, and never had she appeared so dazzlingly beautiful to her husband as on that night, and he wondered how he could have forgotten for so long that she *was* a splendid woman. Astonished at his early return, for it was very rarely that Jonas left his office till near midnight, his wife gladly welcomed him, and to amuse him, he seemed so gloomy, she entered into a description of the brilliant scene of amusement from which she was just come. But she was speedily silenced by his cold, sharp voice, exclaiming,

"For God's sake, madam, cease! I have not come home to hear about such trash and stuff as that! I wonder if woman ever had a thought in her head, beside of dress and gaiety?"

"Perhaps," was the indignant answer, "if you had chosen to find that out at an earlier day, your curiosity might have been easily satisfied. I am not aware that you ever attempted to find anything to *care* for, or *love* in a *woman*. Our married life has not proved it, certainly."

"Tell me, for Heaven's sake, what are we living for? What *should* man and woman live for?" exclaimed the husband in his bewilderment and shame, scarcely aware what he was asking.

"If you wish to know, I can tell you readily, though it seems to me you have wisdom enough to reply to the question yourself, if you would. Man should not marry that he may have a settled home, and so secure his comfort, and then desert a wife utterly, in every way save that the world would call desertion. He should not *dare* vow to love, honor, and cherish, and then give only a fortune and a name; if he does, he will soon enough find for what a woman of any spirit is compelled to live, by the necessities of her nature. If you have wedded yourself so wholly, as you know you have, to fame, what is left to me? Do you think it satisfies me to be a partner of your fortune, the keeper of your house, the bearer of your name? am I to *glory* in a life, the light of which is to come so coldly through you? It seems to me *you* should be the last to wonder that I have become, at my time of life, a leader of fashion, virtually mocking at love, youth, and womanly duty, by my way of living. *You* should not be the one to express astonishment that I do not cling more devotedly to my home, when Heaven

knows beyond its beauty, and *that* wealth has made, it has not for me one attraction !”

The wife spoke nervously and bitterly, for she felt that she had been cheated of love, and all that constancy of wedded devotion in which her heart was a fervent believer when she became Jonas Ottley’s wife.

“Agnes,” he said, reluctantly, “I did not come home to-night—I have not spoken to you so—to arouse your anger. I do not wish to offer, nor can I listen, willingly, to such abusive words ; I came to tell you of disgrace that has befallen us—to speak words, the thought of whose truth burns my brain—oh, God ! God !”

In a moment she was beside him, all anger vanished from her face, and tears were in her eyes. “Forgive me—forgive me that I have spoken so, and at such a time,” she implored.

“Our boy Herbert—he has gone,” murmured the father, as though he feared the sound of his own words : “he has married one of the opera corps—one of the dancers ; I *hope* he has married her, for he has gone with one of them—I cannot tell where ; and, Agnes, that is ——” but he was speaking to one who no more heard what he was saying than the sculptured images upon the mantel.

In more than one home, at that very moment, people were marvelling at and extolling the wonderful beauty, and superb dignity of that woman ; they did not see her, none but her alarmed husband saw her in her time of agony and humiliation—for that oldest boy, despite his wild folly, and want of all respect, and reverence, had been the mother’s idol : in her inmost soul she had worshipped him, and it had been the highest joy that had ever fallen to her superficial life, the power to dream of what he might, and perhaps would yet be. Her first-born ! her darling ! she had hoped for him with

“Patient, vigilant, never-weary love—”

had trusted to his high nature’s soon wearying of the ignoble pleasures he restlessly sought ;—she had believed that the talents with which he was gifted, would press so heavily upon him at *last*, that he would be compelled to arouse, exert, and employ

them. She had prayed for him who seldom prayed for herself—she had consoled herself ever with the thought that he was not vicious, that the temptations which beguiled him would soon lose their power—she had dreamed that even if wild and gay, he was not evil-minded—and now he was dishonored, and had fled with a guilty companion! Ah, indeed, Death is not the only Iconoclast!

But the parents lived on through their grief and shame, and the time that elapsed might not be counted by years when they had to all appearance totally forgotten the dreadful hour when they, for the first time in their lives, heartily sympathised with each other in their sorrows.

With redoubled ardor, that he might forget his trouble, the father plunged deeper into the mysteries of business, and won more of fame. Socially and politically, what high station he had now, but who that has looked with understanding, and watched the Drama of Life, will ask if he was content therewith? I never yet heard any say, "I have enough," save one, and every day of his life that man's deeds belied his words.

Of the one remaining son, who was rapidly following in the footsteps of his elder brother, but little remains to be said. His story was a brief, but an awful one.

That he might be far removed from the temptations and beguilements which surrounded him in his city home, the father procured for him a lieutenancy in the navy, and in a vessel bound for China, the young man went aboard. The parents never beheld him again; for long before the years that were to elapse before his return were passed, the stern heart and the proud head of Jonas Ottley was again bent in shame, and agony, and the face of Agnes was withdrawn from the gay crowd, for the tidings came to them that the boy in whom they had latterly suffered so much of hope to centre, had for a fearful crime in a foreign land, paid the death-penalty! Among strangers, where the authority of his father's name could not avail to save, in a moment of passion he had shed blood—and "by man must his blood be shed."

It would seem that the father had been suffered to win power

and fame only that he might be punished a hundred-fold in humiliation. Indeed, indeed he had paid dear for all that he had attained in the eyes of the world! the best years of his life were given to the drudgeries of a laborious profession, the love of his heart had been suffered, from coldness, to languish into death—his parental duties had all been sacrificed—and he had secured the triumph of a day! How purely selfish seemed his life-labor, even to *him*, in the time of that last, and exceeding great affliction! Himself, and his as miserable wife were left alone, robbed of happiness, self-defrauded of peace, both bankrupts in a higher court than he had ruled in yet.

Agnes Ottley never again appeared in the gay world of fashion, where she had reigned and administered laws, arbitrary as those of the Medes and Persians. The last household joy she had counted on was removed, and with its removal the last connecting link between her husband and herself was removed. It was not a sorrow that had fallen on them which they could endure and “be silent,” feeling that for some wise purpose, Heaven had afflicted them. Such sorrows bring with them always a God-sent consolation. But they, how could they escape the doubt as to where the condemnation for the evil of their sons should fall? Had *they* in pursuit of other things besides their children’s spiritual good, been the direct cause of their ruin? Had they *ever* been the parents they should have been? Had they totally unfitted their sons for manhood, and tempted them to folly and to sin, by their own example? Alas, for the parents who are forced to ask themselves such questions, when the condemning answer their conscience forces will not avail forever!

Would you ask of the still later manhood of Jonas Ottley? I have seen an old man, very, very old, though not because of the lapse of years since his natal hour. He has not yet seen three-score and ten. But there are furrows in his cheek, and deep lines on his forehead, and his hair is white as snow. And I have heard that in his early youth that aged man gave the brightest promise for the future, for he was *ambitious*, and gifted with a strong, and powerful intellect, and how in his manhood older men looked reverently to him, and wise men prized him.

and his voice was potent in the halls of legislation, and that his legal fame went abroad through all the land. And of his wealth they did not need to tell of that, for I could see his broad possessions, and I knew that men held for him the title-deeds of estates immense, and that towns and villages had been named with his name. It seemed a mystery when I looked on the faded eyes, and saw their meaningless glare. His lips would move incessantly, as his servants led him through his beautiful grounds, but when the passer-by would pause, he knew no intelligible words issued from them, and it seemed strange, for that voice was like a clarion once, ringing out truths and principles which startled, and delighted, and amazed the multitude!

He was not near the age of that "old man eloquent," who, when his hair was whitened by time, was still found laboring for the cause of civil freedom—who, while his voice was uplifted in the honored halls where its echoes had been so often heard, received even then his death-summons. I say he was not nearly so old as that admirable, *great* old man—yet one would have thought Jonas Ottley had outlived a century.

When I asked, seeing him always attended by menials, if the man had no wife or child to care for him in his miserable condition, they told me that his lady had died of a broken heart—that she had once been beautiful as her husband was gifted, that she had been beloved by many, and by those who but rarely looked on her splendid form and face, with a better love than her husband cherished for her; and when they spoke of her, they wept. And of the children of Jonas? alas, you need not to hear more of them.

Methinks it were a sight that might almost rouse old Peleg from his grave—this miserable ending of the great hopes he dreamed when his boy first started in life. At the time of his death, Jonas was in the height of his pride and prosperity, and the thought surely never entered his head, when, with his dying breath he blessed his children, that ere many years should pass, the son in whom he gloried would be reduced to a state of childish helplessness—his fine mind shattered—his race to all intents fully run!

THE WITHERED FIG TREE.

"Is there any thing whereof it may be said, see, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us."

I.

"HELEN! Helen! Where the deuce is the girl? Forever wanting when she's wanted! It is unaccountable, Emma, that you can't teach her to stop in one place two minutes together. Helen! Helen!"

"Yes, papa!" was the instant reply of the frightened child, who from her play-house in a distant corner of the mansion heard herself called so impatiently—"I'm coming; I'll be there in just a moment," and the voice drew nearer and nearer as the assurance was repeated; but it was succeeded by a sharp, quick cry of fear and agony, and David and Emma Wise ran together from the room where they waited the little delinquent's coming. But when they reached the stairway both paused, and the child's shriek was echoed by them in a tone of wilder horror, when they saw her lying motionless on the floor of the hall, many feet below them. She had fallen from the top to the bottom of that long flight of stairs. It was only for an instant that fear paralyzed them, then Mrs. Wise was lifting Helen, and hurrying with her to her own chamber, and the father was away in search of a physician.

Little Helen was pale and senseless as a corpse when she was laid upon her mother's bed. Once while Mrs. Wise stood rubbing the cold hands in her own, she faintly opened her eyes, but they had no expression of consciousness, and closed imme-

diately ; and had it not been for the faint motion of the pulse, which Emma felt as she clasped the tiny hands, she had thought her idol a shattered one indeed, so like a corpse the still and pallid face did look.

But Helen was not dead ; she did not die. Yet an anguish scarcely less terrible than bereavement fell upon the mother's heart, when the little one recovered from the shock and the weakness attending that fall, and the physician told her the dreadful truth that the child's spine was broken !

A fine opportunity for the study of character was afforded in the manner of the afflicted father and mother, when they were coping with the severe trial which they must bear.

Helen was just seven years old when the shocking accident occurred. During those years of life she had been her mother's constant care, her joy and consolation ; and now when the fond woman looked forward, and compared the probable future of her darling child with that which she had imagined and hoped for, she was overwhelmed with grief. For a time sorrow mastered her reason ; she could not feel grateful that Helen's life was spared ; it seemed to her then as though no deeper affliction than this was possible. At the first, it was agony for her to listen to the gentle tones of the child's voice—she could not bear to meet the troubled, yet patient glances of the mild eyes, in which she had once read the peaceful, happy fortunes of the little one.

Emma Wise had never been a vulgarly proud, vain mother—but she had so loved her daughter, so adored her, had pictured for her, in imagination, so many bright fortunes, that she was perfectly prostrated before the sorrowful reality of pain, distress, and deformity which was now before her.

With the father it was otherwise. Yet it was neither religion nor philosophy that supported *him*, simply calm indifference. Had it been a son, their infant Jamie, on whom so sad a fate had fallen, Emma Wise would have had no occasion to ask in wondering disgust if the man had, indeed, a heart ; she would have seen how his tears could fall like hers, in torrents—how his spirit could, like hers, be crushed and broken. But—it was only little Helen who suffered, and though she was his first-

born child, that name was not significant of love, nor of devotion on his part.

The disappointment which he made no effort to hide, when his daughter was first laid in his arms, had given place to no other emotion in regard to her. Helen had never seemed to him a child, nor was he to her as a father. She obeyed, she feared, but she loved him never! He gave her a name, a shelter, food and raiment, and he gave no more!

II.

To speak the sad and solemn truth, David and Emma Wise were as ill-matched a pair as ever vowed to live together for better or for worse. Their union was a mystery. No compulsion on the one side attended—no love on the other induced it. The wealthy bachelor, after a short residence in Lynn, had proposed to the pretty, amiable, portionless Emma Haynes—she had accepted him, and they were married and removed at once to another town in Massachusetts, where the bridegroom had purchased a beautiful place, called “Sunnyside”—which a now bankrupt merchant had spent a fortune and sixteen years in beautifying. Here the newly married pair found themselves surrounded by all the good things of life—what at least, and with some reason, are usually accounted such: they were in want of nothing in the wide world but capacity for enjoyment. It was a very needful need!

To Emma Wise, even before the first year of their marriage had passed, it was a perfect mystery how or why her husband had sought her for his wife. She was a very lovely woman, and she knew that: she had been told the pleasant fact by admiring friends sufficiently often to become well aware of it. But there were lovelier women in the world than she, and Emma felt that David had not married her for her beauty's sake. Nor for her intellect or her learning, had he sought her to be his companion in life—he had never cared to discover how far she was capacitated for study with him, he never spoke with her on subjects above or beyond the common-place, though had he done so, he would have found that she had an inquiring, active mind, that was capable of great development.

As to herself, she was a woman made for love—to love. Not a wild, passionate, absorbing adoration of another human being, but gentle, unobtrusive, constant devotion. She thought, in sincerity, that it was quite possible for her to love David Wise—that she could cheer his loneliness, that she could enliven his home and his heart, that she could find in him, since he wished her for a wife, a lover as well as husband. In this she had been bitterly disappointed.

Wed a woman of twenty summers with a groom of fifty winters ; let the affectionateness of the young nature be repulsed, *refused* acceptance, scorned, indeed, by the old, and “the end of it” will in no case be a problem difficult to solve. If the wife is a gay, life-full nature, she will not suffer herself to be crushed in spirit—she will seek in the worldly what she cannot find at home—will become a trifter, careless, unbelieving—miserable ! If she be of another mould, more quiet, gentle, hopeful, she will not easily be repulsed. She will endeavor and strive against hope, and if she be finally vanquished in her effort, she will die young, and of a broken heart. It is the inevitable result.

There was something besides the stern gravity and dignity of age evident in the cold, distant, disagreeable manner of David Wise. He was subject to fits of moody thoughtfulness, which, at times led him to pass whole days alone in his chamber, where he suffered none to intrude, except the servants who waited on him ; which were vented often in sudden journeys, undertaken without a moment’s warning, and from which he returned as suddenly and unannounced. He now had no taste for books. His library was large and valuable, such as none but a studious, learned man would have chosen ; but after his marriage he never entered it to read, or to touch the volumes that filled those long lines of shelf, which reached from the floor to the ceiling of the handsome apartment. He had no liking for society ; conversation seemed to him almost always an annoyance, and friendship with other men, he shunned of all things.

There was but one exception to this rule of isolation which he had laid down for himself ; it was made in favor of a young man who had come to Sunnyside soon after David Wise was married, and remained there till Jamie was born, a dependent,

no relative, yet dearly beloved by his protector, who, unmindful of the great disparity in their years and station, made Alfred Lord his chosen friend, and almost constant companion.

This person was a youth of ordinary abilities, and in personal appearance inferior; taciturn, self-possessed, always mild and respectful, he was, also, but it was difficult to conceive the charm that bound his patron, or master, or friend, to him, that made the old man so solicitous always for *his* comfort, when that of persons who had, as one might suppose, a better claim on his time and attention, was invariably neglected.

Whatever it may have been to other people, this intimate communion between David Wise and Alfred Lord, was to Emma a perfect mystery, which was far enough from being solved by any explanation which the husband vouchsafed.

III.

It was late one afternoon, in the September of that summer of Helen's accident, that Mrs. Wise and her daughter walked together in the great garden, which was the beauty of Sunnyside. They had wandered for an hour through the long walks, gathering splendid autumn flowers, and conversing together in the low, subdued tone of persons who have suffered much; not in the gay and joyous manner of the young mother with her cherished child.

Their steps were now directed towards the house—they had reached the arbor at the entrance gate, when Helen paused and said—

“Come to this path, please mamma, I want you to look at my tree.”

And they retraced their steps to a remote corner of the garden, where, the spring preceding, Helen had spent many hours in arranging a flower-bed that was called her own. A friend had given her a root of the fig tree, and the child had planted and watered it morning and night, till it had fairly made its home in the ground and began to grow. From that happy day, when the green buds peeped above the earth, she had watched it with unceasing devotion, lingering about it as though it were a beloved friend whose life was in danger, and watching, with

the utmost anxiety, to see if it really *would live* in that cold northern soil.

And, to her great joy, it had done well. Shoots had sprung from the main stem, and had grown tall and luxuriantly, and the tree gave promise of a long and healthful life. So it had flourished all the summer—but when, to-day, Helen made her accustomed visit to the much-loved little garden, she had found its leaves all yellow and drooping—it seemed to her a human thing, pining for its native land—she believed that it was going to die.

So it was with a heavy heart that she went with her mother to look upon it, for it seemed to the poor child as though a living sympathy were established between herself and that senseless thing—she seemed to read her own destiny in it.

“See, mamma, it is just like me,” she said, when they stood looking on the faded leaves—“it is all withered, and will die.”

“Not like you, dear Helen. There is a long life before you, I believe. You grow stronger every day; it is growing late in the season, and you know the change of climate would affect this thing sooner than other vegetation—would give it just the appearance it has now. We will have the root taken up, to-night, and removed to the house for the winter. I am almost sure it will again come out then.”

“But see,” persisted Helen, “feel the stems. How soft and withered *they* are. That wouldn’t be, even if the leaves changed naturally, for we haven’t had any frost yet.”

“Never mind, you’ll see in the spring. I am perfectly sure the leaves will come out again then. Perhaps the poor thing is home-sick, who knows?”

“Oh,” exclaimed Helen, with eager sadness, but she caught her mother’s smile and paused. “Soon,” she added, thoughtfully, “I should be Heaven-sick, if you were not always with me. Mamma, I shall die the very day you die.”

“Hush! we are in the hand of the Lord, Helen. If He should take me from you, there would be sufficient care laid upon you. It would be necessary that you should live, dear child.”

“I am just four years older than Jamie,” the little girl said, thoughtfully.

"Yes, if ever anything should happen, if I should be taken away, I should feel safe in leaving the little darling to your care, my precious child."

Helen clasped her mother's hand, and they turned away together from the fig tree. She had forgotten her dear friend in sadder thoughts. But Mrs. Wise, whose watchful love bore in mind all things that could at all affect the happiness of those about her, sought out the gardener, and gave him directions for carefully removing the tree at once to the root-house, where it should remain for the winter.

IV.

The casual suggestion of the mother, that little Jamie *might*, one day, be left to her charge, produced its impression and effect on the daughter's mind. From that day, he was endowed with a new and touching interest in her eyes; she became his second nurse, and suffered him to be rarely from her sight. The child was strikingly plain in appearance, and, except to those daily associated with him, destitute of all the winning graces and ways of childhood. His eyes were large, and dark, and brilliant, like his father's, but they were destitute of expression. The fixed, natural brightness was all. It was a glitter like that of the serpent's eye: charming to the momentary observer, but the gaze troubled and astonished the mother. Even little Helen had observed it, for she one day said to her mother, "I never saw any one with eyes like Jamie's; they look and look, and are so very bright, but they don't seem to see anything."

Yet that he was not blind they knew.

Two years since Jamie's birthday had passed, when another son was added to the household—but the father's pride, and affection, and interest, were centred all in his oldest boy. He was an idol.

Edwin was a beauty—a bright, amiable child, who, in feature, and voice, and manner, strongly resembled his mother. In his "mild blue eyes," was there nothing that told powerfully on the heart of his father, as well as on hers, who, morning and evening, uttered her grateful thanks to Him who had given the blessed child? Was there nothing in the quiet affectionateness

of the boy's words and acts, that won for him involuntary embraces from the grave old man? Was there nothing in his graceful motions, in his generous acts, which sometimes won a fervent kiss, an earnest blessing? Never. All that his parent's heart *could* feel, was concentrated in and lavished on James, the first-born son. And of him?

The last few months preceding his third birthday, had been to both these parents months of lingering suspense and agony. A dark and dreadful suspicion had been, during this time, finding for itself lodgment in their thought, and the bare idea made them tremble.

At first, in their own breasts they tried to hush the fear which forced itself upon them, that all was not well with the child; but when the months went on, and no spark of that intelligence which the parent is ever the first to see and glory in, was perceivable in him—when no other emotion than of simple affection or of passionate anger was ever aroused in him, they began to believe what it was almost death for them to imagine. Neither David nor Emma Wise had spoken this suspicion to the other, they kept it a dreadful guest in their own mind. How should the mother dare to speak to that husband, who so adored the boy, of idiocy! How should the father mourn with her, whom he was ready to curse in his heart, over this awful chastisement?

For himself, he could not long endure uncertainty. Any assurance was preferable to that hope-blasting doubt, and he sought the physician, Dr. Sympson, one day, demanding of him the truth. And then the fear received its assurance, there was no hope, no help for Jamie—he *was an idiot!*

It was enough. To “curse God and die,” seemed from that day the only thought or inclination in the soul of the wretched man. Thenceforth, Helen and Edwin, whose chief interest in his eyes had been, that they were the brother and sister, the companions of Jamie, were as nothing to him—and now the boy who had been his pride, his thought for all the future, was also to the father as one dead.

But, to depart when he was wearied and sick of life—this was not granted him. David's bodily strength failed not—he was full of vitality. The stern disappointment and trial he was

forced to bear, broke his spirit—but his health kept firm, and he presented then that loveless, mournful sight, a wretched, dissatisfied, tempted, and falling man. Then he never smiled save when he looked on the wine cup, and his merriment in those hours of unnatural gaiety, was such as brought a pallor to his young wife's face, and increased heaviness to her heart.

Upon Emma the blow fell startlingly, cruelly; but it produced another effect than it had on her husband. It chilled and terrified her loving heart, it bowed her lovely head, yet she had no wish for death. To herself it had, indeed, been a relief, could she have died the day when the truth was told her, and she met that look of David Wise. The spirit of gladness and joy had long been grieved away from her, and she was prepared for the last change—she longed for the silence and freedom of the grave. But for Helen, the weak, frail girl, who seemed to live through, and joy only in her mother, for Jamie, the now more than ever dear, the unfortunate child, for little helpless Edwin, for these life seemed to her an almost absolute necessity—a something she could not relinquish—which must not be taken away!

The thought of Providence, however, was not as her thought. While the father, who seemed but a dread to his children, daily strengthened in health, the mother faded and faded away; her strength vanished, and the few who knew her, (well did these love her)—when they looked on her white face, and watched her feeble motion, and heard her voice, knew that she was passing from earth. And Helen knew it also.

Going one day into her mother's chamber, she found her on her knees in prayer. Her first impulse was to retreat softly from the sanctuary, but in another moment she entered and threw herself beside her parent, and bowed her head likewise.

When Mrs. Wise rose again, she said tenderly,

"My child, all I can do is to pray. Oh, when you stand in my place, pray without ceasing. You are born to a troublous lot, Helen; God help you."

Helen could not speak—could only look with troubled, questioning eyes upon her mother, who also for a moment was

silent. She was gathering strength to speak the saddest words to which a mother can give utterance.

"I said, Nelly, when you stand in my place, pray without ceasing. I trust that your devotions are never neglected; but when I am gone you will learn, if you have not yet, what a precious privilege prayer is. Never forget, however dark the earthly lot is, there is One in Heaven who regards all His children with mercy. Helen, you are a strong-minded girl, though so weak physically. I want you from this day to exert all the powers of your mind. I must speak to you of these things while I can, that you may be accustomed to the thought of my approaching death, for I would spare you the pain of a sudden shock. It is better to talk of these things than to increase the sorrow by stifling it in our hearts."

"Oh, mother! mother! you must not speak of dying. I can bear anything but that *you* should die—only live! Speak, say you *will* live *for me!*"

She looked up into her mother's face, while she made that despairing appeal of devotion, but her eyes fell—a mortal chill passed over her, and her countenance grew white as her mother's while she waited for the reply.

"Nelly, I do not fear death, for I know that I am going home. It is this parting with my dear, precious children, that makes me grieve. All these thirteen years of your life, you have been a blessing to me—my comfort and my hope: and yet—yet I must lay a dreadful burden on you, whom, O! that you might be spared such trial!—God's will be done!—will you, Nelly, be to your brothers a mother? Will you keep them always safe under your care? Poor, dear child, what do I ask?"

The pallor fled from Helen's face. It glowed with light—she actually smiled as she knelt before her mother, and said—

"Hear me; I would gladly die if that could save you, dear mamma. Now, I will live for you—Heaven hear me! I will be a mother to Jamie and Edwin—I will do what I promise. Do not fear me—but you, you, I—" The light and the glow faded from her face, and she fell fainting to the floor.

V.

It was the first time the mother and daughter had spoken together on this subject; but it was not the last. It was a relief to them to speak much of that which so constantly preyed on their thoughts—to encourage each other, as they were about to part for ever.

During the weeks preceding their dreaded final separation, many were the communings, tender and solemn, that were held between them. They gained strength in this sad converse to speak composedly of the great change about to befall the household. To Helen the very idea of that parting was torture the most dreadful; but she had schooled herself to outward calmness, for the girl's high soul was aroused, and her frailty was proved to be, as her mother had said, only of a physical nature. She had a moral strength and capacity to endure, which her father had not.

To him the wife had never spoken of her probable early death. She could not nerve herself to that. Why was it that when she had revealed all that was in her heart to her young daughter, she could not do so much to him who might have claimed her confidence as well? If he had ever in a day of sorrow or rejoicing, sought her counsel, or companionship, or sympathy—if he had ever by one single act or word since their marriage day, proved to her that he loved her, this might have been a possibility, but to a nature so cold, so foreign as his, she could not speak of sickness, or suffering, or death. She feared to do it. She shrunk from meeting the cold look of his searching eyes, the monosyllabic wonder that she should dream of dying—or—or the lighting of feature and voice, that would tell it was no grief for him to part with her. She was not the woman to live with such a man. She was too easily crushed, a flower too lovely, too drooping, too frail. A long life might have been hers, had a kindly arm supported her, and a strong, loving heart shielded her—as it was, now in her thirty-second year, it was appointed for her to die!

Even Helen had never but once said to her father any thing respecting the great loss they were about to meet.

Astonished at his apparent blindness, and grieved because of his inattention, the timid girl at last resolved to talk with him about it. Perhaps, she thought, he *did* see and feel it all, but for the mother's sake maintained that calm serenity—and O! what a joy for her, could she find that he had tears of grief to shed with her!—to feel that he too loved the dying as she loved her!

It required a desperate effort on Helen's part to speak to him with whom she should so soon be left alone of this. Her words were uttered in a flood of tears. It was the awful *truth* of what she tried to speak, which he received with that unsympathizing glance and impatient gesture, that so completely unnerved her when she had tried desperately to be calm, which wrung from her the bitter appeal—

“Papa, don't you know she is dying?”

The sharp interrogation, “Know what? Who is dying?” quickly brought her to herself, and with surprising self-command, that was forced upon her by the great revulsion in her feeling, she replied—

“My mother.”

“Fudge, child! she has been in just that state always. She has a cold, and worries about it too much. Besides, she spends too much time altogether shut up in that room with James and Edwin. You should take that care off her hands, if she is not well. But don't be frightened about your mother. She never complains to me.”

“She never complains, papa. But she is very, very ill.”

“I'll speak with Doctor Sympton about it. If any thing has gone wrong with her, or she is really ill, I can get at the real truth of the matter better by asking him than I should speaking with her. It would, besides, alarm her.”

“But it don't alarm her. And she would be so happy if you could come to her sometimes. She speaks to me of her death every day. I know she isn't afraid to die.”

“If your mother has been so sick as you say, it would have been impossible for her to appear so constantly at table, and to go about the house and grounds so much. It's only a womanish

whim, so don't talk any more about it. Have you seen Jam's this morning?"

"I left him with mamma. She was playing with him."

"Well, do you go and take her place. You ought to do more towards amusing the boy, and not leave it to her. Did she send you here to have this talk with me?"

"Oh, papa, no!" was the faint exclamation, which sounded very like a reproach, as the child went hastily from the room.

VI.

MR. WISE *did* consult the physician who was in his wife's attendance, but it happened that he delayed doing so till the very day she died. To the last he had neglected her—and not a word in those final days passed between them of communion, or counsel, or of love. To the last Emma had hoped that it would not end thus—to the last she had supplicated for him—and to the very last he had remained far from her, blind and deaf to her unspoken call.

The morning she died she was sitting in a large arm-chair in the nursery. She had been trying to amuse poor Jamie, and had walked with him several times about the room, but she soon became very weary, and when she sat down again, the imitative little creature seated himself on the cushioned bench at her feet, turning over the pages of gayly-colored picture books. Shortly after the nurse came into the room, leading Edwin, and the mother dismissed her, saying she would look after the children herself a little.

From that moment when she gathered the three around her, an increased expression of solemn earnestness had lighted her pale face, which, it seemed to Helen, was growing more deathly every instant.

There was a dead silence in that chamber. Helen sat close beside her mother, holding Edwin, so that the fond parent's eyes might be constantly upon him; there were thoughts with the dying woman which could not be spoken, which she must depart without uttering, even to that eldest child. By an effort she roused herself at last, and said—

"I want you to kneel down with Edwin, close beside Jamie.

I will pray *with* you the last time—but I shall pray *for* you for ever.”

Helen obeyed, and her mother’s soul was poured forth in such fervent, solemn supplication, that she felt it was indeed for the last time. When the whispered “amen” was said, she waited till the hand that rested in blessing on her head was withdrawn, but the silence that followed frightened her—she stood up and looked upon her mother.

And as she looked, she knew that the last change was near, and for a moment, though she had striven long and hard to be prepared for this, she was wildly startled ; but that fear passed, and she said—

“ Shall I call *him*, mamma ? Shall I speak to papa for you ? ”

“ Do not leave me,” was the reply, uttered with astonishing energy : “ these children are *yours*, Helen ; do not desert them, for your mother’s sake. Kiss me, Helen.”

She was dead when the young girl lifted her face from the face of her mother, after that long embrace.

VII.

IN the garden at Sunnyside every spring had been planted in a remote corner in Helen’s garden, a beautiful fig-tree, which every autumn saw removed to the cellar of the house for protection against frosts and storms, which its nature could not endure. It was a singularly formed tree. The stem was large, but ill-shaped ; it looked as though it had been blasted in its growth, for it was only two feet in height, while from every part of it had sprung fresh and luxuriant stems, each adorned with the most beautiful foliage. It was true the early and scarcely perceptible frost, which had fallen upon it in that first year of its exile, had in a measure blighted the tree ; but the sunshine, the dew, and the tender care bestowed upon it another year, had saved it. So had it been with Helen Wise. The tree, as she once said to her mother, *was* like her. A calamity had come upon her, and, in a measure, dwarfed and withered her physical energy—but the mother’s love had been like dew

and sunshine on her heart: it had developed in that shrinking frame, that timid nature, powers which, under a less genial influence, had never made themselves manifest; had evolved her moral courage, her power to act and think.

"You *are* like that tree, Helen," her mother had repeated, when she saw it, as she had prophesied, recovering from the first year's exposure.

Helen would not *then* have thought of comparing herself with it—the simile to her imagination only held good so long as the withered shrub was at the point of death.

"Though you, my daughter, will never be a beautiful woman, save to those who know you, to them you will be all you could wish. Your mind and the affections of your heart, thank God, have not been dwarfed. Be what you will, Helen, I have no fear in trusting you. You have never been a child, as children are—you are a woman in thought and in motive."

A sad truth was that. The tiny girl *was* a woman. She had never been a child from the day when that deformity overshadowed her. In her sympathizing mother she had lived, and known what it was to be happy—but when left with the children alone with her father, there was a contraction of the nature which to the mother was open as the rose is to sunlight.

There was none in the wide world then to assist her with loving counsel, to assure her with confidence, to love her with appreciating fondness. Between thirteen and sixty-three there is a difference; but a greater dissimilarity than that of age existed between David Wise and his eldest child—a wider gulf than that of years spread between them.

VIII.

ONLY a few weeks had passed, after his wife's death, when Mr. Wise acquainted Helen with his intention of making an immediate change in his family affairs. He had, he said, determined upon placing her in a boarding-school near Boston; the boys he should send to the South, where they could be under the safe charge of one of his relatives. It was high time, he thought, that the children's education should be attended to.

When Helen heard this resolution, she knew not what to do. Of herself, though she shrunk from the presence and companionship of strangers, she thought not now. The injunction of her mother that she should always remain with, and be all to her brothers, seemed one she must fulfil. Yet how to oppose the will of that father? Not by tears, she answered herself—and by words, had she thus been ever able to influence him?

She saw the preparations for departure going on day after day at Sunnyside, but could not bring herself to *act* concerning it till the appointed time drew evidently very near. Then every word that Edwin spoke fell with such a pang upon her heart, every caress of Jamie was so powerful to strengthen her resolution, that she at last one day sought her father. The boys were both with her, and she nerved herself for the dreaded encounter by looking upon them—and a mere look was enough. She promised herself to speak calmly and to entreat humbly, if need be, that he would not separate them, that he would entrust to her care the children their mother, in dying, had desired might be left to her guidance. But when she came to him her soul could find no utterance but in the earnest petition—

“Oh, father, do not take the children away from me!”

“The deuce! What could *you* do with them?” was the answer. “I said it was the best way for them to go to their older relatives, and you must certainly go off to school. Don’t you think it time you should be learning?”

“Only let them go with me! I want to learn—but I could not live away from them. Mother wished that we should be kept together. I will not trouble any body with the care of them; there are so few of us, let us grow up together. Oh, father, do, do let it be so!”

“But—I can’t understand you. What would you do with such things in a boarding-school? Jamie, what *could* you do with him?—and Edwin, he’s little better than a baby.”

“It was mother’s wish that we should be kept together. I know about Jamie better than any body else, and can manage him better—and as for Edwin, oh, I cannot part with him. Don’t part us, father,—do not!”

The old man looked down on the little bent figure whose pale

face was so earnestly watching him—and a throb of pity, I do not say of affection, moved his heart. He paused at last in his pacing through the parlor, and simply said—it was in a tone less harsh than usual,

“I’ll make the arrangements, and it shall be as you wish; but you must be able to give me a good account of your charge, Helen, when I return.”

“Are you going away, too, father?”

Perhaps the old man noticed the great difference in the calm tone with which the question was asked, and the fervent manner in which she had pleaded a moment before—he looked at her with close scrutiny as he answered—

“Yes, I am going to Europe. I shall sail from Boston next month.”

The intelligence was received in silence.

For, indeed, it was no occasion for grief to either of these children.

To Jamie the father was a perfect abhorrence—no fear of parental authority, no awe, or love, held him in check; in the spirit of opposition, malice, and folly, he met all rebuke, chastisement, or attempt to control, which proceeded from that parent. He had been meek, submissive as a lamb, to the gentle Emma Wise, his pitying mother. By stern measures, by force, by threats or frowns, the poor creature was not to be subdued—and the mere fact that his father had attempted such governance was enough to arouse his unfortunate child’s blind fury and ungovernable hate.

Edwin, gay as a bird, easily affected by all *magnetic influences*, loving, and fearing, and hating with a warm-hearted, petted child’s enthusiasm, Helen, meek, long suffering, careful, patient, full of reverence, to these young creatures who adored each other, the day of parting with their sire was not an evil day. They had not in his presence the freedom of their poor brother, who was restrained in mirth or in wrath by no mental, moral suasion, they could not conquer the intense consciousness, the unnatural dread, with which his presence inspired them—his removal from them, therefore, was only the removal of a bugbear.

IX.

MONEY will purchase all sorts of favor; (what a truism have I proclaimed!) it secured the uncommon accommodation which Mr. Wise sought in — school, Boston, rooms for his children, and the nurse-woman—a rare privilege, which people less used to domination, would scarcely have thought of asking—and which, on no account, had been granted, but for a compensation commensurate with the favor.

The brothers and sisters formed a group which much interested the principal, Mrs. Hughes. They appealed silently, but forcibly, to her better nature, (for she, in common with the great majority, had *two* natures.) The lady was a widow, she had been a mother, but her children all died young; the silent, unobtrusive, but very evident sorrows, and the rich mental grace of Helen Wise, made an ineffaceable impression upon her mother heart. She was a true woman, and she saw in the sister of those boys, one whom it was her duty to strengthen in every way, that she might not be crushed in the trials which it was very apparent she had to bear.

But while to herself the lady was making this resolution, Helen, in her own heart, was awed by the dignified manner of the principal—was striving by equal reserve to guard herself against all, that in her new position, might, if *suffered* to come in near enough contact, dishearten and afflict. Mrs. Hughes was unfortunate in the impression which she conveyed to her new pupil's mind—for even when she smiled her kindest on Helen, the young girl had no other thought but to thank God that *her own* were with her—that she might see in Edwin's sunny face a reflection of her mother's smile, and hear in his voice an echo of those dear tones which were hushed forever.

Helen was perhaps too keenly alive to the fact, that the sense of beauty is by no means an unselfish sense—and that, of the many thoughtless young creatures who surrounded her, very few would care or think to penetrate beyond the unattractive "outward, visible form." She was too gentle, as well as quite too proud to wish their pity, and she would have suffered all things from loneliness, rather than ask the friendship or love of

strangers. The curious glances of scholars she could bear, for her mother had long ago schooled her in the knowledge, and her own sensitiveness assured her, that she would never attract the attention of strangers by her beauty—but, unavoidably, by her deformity.

When the school duties were over, (it was a happy thing for her,) she had sufficient occupations to draw her thoughts from self, and from the young creatures around her. It was in these hours that she relieved the nurse from her cares, and either walked with the children, or amused them in her room.

The youngest boy was now seven years old. As yet, he had only found a playmate and companion, an equal brother, in Jamie. He had never yet been told that his elder brother's words were only echoings, which had no meaning to him who uttered them. He knew not that the passions, before which he sometimes shrunk in terror, were only those of a fiercely animal nature. He had yet to learn the dreadful truth, that God, in his Providence, had sent the child into the world shorn of intellect—a creature in human form, with human voice and faculties, but without mind. And Helen dreaded the day when Edwin should feel the shock which had so troubled her, when they told her that Jamie was an idiot.

Edwin was small in stature for his years, but a very beautiful child. His noble head was his crown of glory—his large, clear, blue eyes, beamed with intelligence—and even in his sleep there was a smile upon his features, that had led one to imagine he held in those hours of abstraction, converse with angels. Helen felt almost a mother's pride thrilling her heart when she looked on him, and every day she remembered to bow down in her thankfulness before the high God, to bless Him, that he had suffered those children to remain with her. She never permitted them to go out and play among the other children. A constant fear for Jamie, a dread lest the thoughtless might acquaint Edwin with what she could not bear that he should yet learn, prevented this. She played with them, she amused them, and the youngest boy's lessons were always attended to under her own supervision.

That the sister was repaid for her devotion a thousand fold, I

need not say. Affectionate obedience and respect were always yielded by Edwin; and that she was encouraged to ceaseless effort by the control she had already been able to exercise over Jamie, in the maddest bursts of passion, could easily be seen. He would become silent and calm in an instant, when she spoke, though none others could subdue him.

But it was not after a day's or a month's exertion that Helen Wise was thus rewarded.

Many a time, after a futile effort to subdue a temper, that, without reason or sense, was wild as the whirlwind, she could only weep over her inefficiency. Could only weep, I said; it had been a sad case, then, indeed; oh, she did more! She remembered her mother's counsel, and she prayed—and, at last, learned the quiet, easy way, in which to master him. Then his will, ever after, was only a slave to hers. Yet Helen never tyrannized; she was never angry with him. Was she perfect, therefore? I said not that. But there was a constant recollection, a constant grief in her heart for him, and to have been vexed, or annoyed with one who lived with such a frightful deprivation, without a thinking mind, she had considered it nothing less than absolute sin.

X.

HUMAN sympathy and investigation had not, at the time of which this is written, made a study of the wants and capacities of the idiot nature. But the sympathy and investigation of Helen Wise, was often turned towards the subject, and she sought and prayed that she might discover how a little light might be thrown in on her brother's rudderless sense; for to contribute *very much* to his happiness, she believed was possible.

In a moment of rage, because of some trifling opposition which Edwin one day made to Jamie, when he would have endangered his life, the boy struck his younger brother a blow, which left a mark on his forehead that was never to be erased. That scar was to Helen Wise a sign of warning, a lesson of patience, a constant incentive. To break that seemingly chainless will, became her serious effort, and so she gave her leisure mo-

ments to the slow and difficult task of teaching him to work—so she hoped he might at last learn, in a mechanical sort of way, to think!

She had often wondered at his extraordinary passion for gay colors, a taste that was easily gratified, and it became a serious question with the thoughtful child, if this passion might not be a blessing in disguise to her brother. Alone and unaided, she set about the solution of that difficult question. Procuring the most brilliant patterns, she painted flowers for him while he stood by and watched her—and then, when he manifested his unmeasured delight as he looked at her work, she undertook to teach him. But it seemed at first an almost fruitless effort; still, it was begun with a hope that was too great to admit of speedy demolition. For months she continued that labor, and at last it began to be successful, Jamie's attention was secured, and what seemed almost like an intelligent interest and desire to learn was aroused. He would sit and listen with his eyes to her voiceless teachings, and work as Helen worked, until his gay copies almost rivalled her not very skilful painting.

Still Helen was not with this conquest content. Knowing that Jamie's rambling, unsettled nature, would never for hours together content itself with one occupation, she bought the gayest wools, and showed him how to hold the needle, and to work with these in patterns his own fancy suggested. Then she learned how to make baskets, that she might teach him again, and to dress dolls, that he might do the same. And in not one of these pious efforts did the sister fail. An unlooked-for joy was this, for not only was the poor boy's time now fully occupied with tasks that delighted him, his passions seemed chained as by some spell: it *was* a spell of music—the music of Helen's gentle, quiet, loving ways! The language of her sad, sweet eyes was as intelligible to him as was that of her words to Edwin—he learned to know when she was grieved, when glad—he seemed, also, to feel with her in her sorrows and her triumphs.

XI.

It was not possible that Helen Wise should live in Boston for the four appointed years (it was thus long her father had de-

cided they should remain at —— school,) without finding among the many who in that time made their home for months together at the seminary, some who became very near and dear to her.

Though the care of her brothers awakened all the tenderness of her heart, as well as the thoughts and exertions of her mind, she needed another interest and affection yet, and for this she found exercise and life in two young girls, twin sisters. The love for these which sprung to active life, was not that flower of sudden birth, that youthful friendship, whose death is as speedy and certain; it followed the interest which their beauty and mutual devotion to each other had awakened. Helen knew that they were also in sorrow. They were orphans, a few years older than herself, who, on their mother's death, had been placed in Mrs. Hughes' charge, for the completion of their education.

It was many months before Helen had interchanged more than a mere casual word with these girls, and they might have finished the prescribed course without forming more than a mere formal acquaintance with her, had it not been that they, attracted by the shining virtues of the little deformed Helen, took advantage of a moment in which they performed towards her an act of humanity, and the advances which they made, were gladly received by her.

There was an astonishing resemblance between Julia and Anna Saxe—more thorough, indeed, than that of their minds. Though in these there was also a great similarity, the one being, as it were, an echo or copy of the other. Not an echo either, for it had much of individuality—but Julia was stronger in constitution, of firmer will, and her intellectual power was greater than that of her sister.

To Helen Wise they were dear alike, and after she had learned them thoroughly, necessary alike. In the warm-heartedness, generous, enthusiastic, chivalrous temperament of Anna, there was something that acted on the not chilled, but worn and saddened nature of Helen, like a charm; it was as a cool breath of wind on a sultry August day. And in thoughtful, courageous, and sympathizing Julia, she found that other friend which she

so needed; a friend whose experience in the world had been more varied and extensive, whose perception was keener than her own, whose ambition was of another sort. There was such an elevating, self-sustaining tendency in her character—her mind was of so pure and high an order, and she was one to mightily influence feebler or more timid persons. If Helen did look up to, and heartily admire this new friend, in turn Julia Saxe revered her gentle companion.

In all her varied and long experience and observation of school-girl friendships, Mrs. Hughes had never seen anything to resemble this, formed between these pupils. And she encouraged its development in every way, for it rejoiced her to see to what sort of minds the heart of her little pet opened itself. Though there were but a few years difference in their ages, the young Southerners were far in advance of Helen—almost all their years had been passed in schools, and they had improved their talents well. Helen's abilities were solid, but by no means brilliant; she moved at a slow pace through her tasks, but all she mastered was well understood, and not to be put away under the lock and key of memory, but to be used and put to advantage; therefore, though not the most promising laborer, because after putting her hand to the plough she never looked back, her teachers knew that the field of mind she worked would be fruitful and abundant.

During school hours the three friends did not once meet in recitation rooms, their tasks were all dissimilar, but when these duties were over, Julia and Anna sought for none so speedily as for plain and quiet Helen. And for their leisure hours they asked no pleasanter occupation than helping her amuse and care for her brothers.

As months passed on, they became like children of one loving family, bearing each other constantly in mind—thoughtful for each other's comfort, assisting, encouraging, and tenderly loving. That was a circle into which none were suffered to intrude, whose perfect harmony another entrance had broken. They were a company of orphans, for David Wise was as one dead to his children—the beautiful bright southerners, the mild,

quiet, and altogether spiritual, loving Helen Wise, poor Jamie, and Edwin the darling, and amusement, the pupil of them all.

It was a circle which, to the great grief of each member, was, at the end of two years, broken. Not, however, by love-destroying or love-chilling words or deeds on the part of either; other frosts effected the separation, the frosts and storms of a New England winter. Anna's health became broken; the efforts she was making to graduate with her sister the succeeding year were too much for her. She inherited from her mother a disposition to consumption, and as she grew older, especially since residing in the North, this became more manifest.

The watchful love of Julia was the first to take alarm, and she did not delay acting on her affectionate fears for a moment. Quite forgetful of all ambitious exertion, which had influenced her so much in the past months, she procured permission of their guardian, and at once set out for their native city, Charleston, in South Carolina.

The separation between Helen and her friends was very grievous to them all. That for those beautiful girls a happy destiny was in store, she could not doubt. Possessed of wealth and talents, and inclination that capacitated them to be and to do all things in the right way, the prospect opening before them was a bright one. If life and health were given them, their genial dispositions would be sure to find all things joyous in this fair world. They themselves, though they stood alone in the world, knew that they were richly blest when they parted with Helen Wise, thinking of the continual care and sorrow that must press upon her always. Yet they could not find it in their hearts to pity her. They admired and loved her, for they saw a heroine in that frail maiden, who, bearing a heavy cross, could yet look up smiling and reverently to the face of Heaven, and say, without a sigh, "Even so, Father." They had called her their dear sister—and they felt that she *was*, indeed, so much, when they kissed her for the last time ere their long journey.

What an episode was that friendship in the solemn, noble poem of the deformed girl's life!

XII.

Long after they were gone, one thought of wonder and of doubt, was lingering in Helen's mind. While she assisted them in packing their things away, the day before their departure, they had shown her the likeness of their mother, saying as they did so, that they had once meant it should never be seen by other than their eyes—it was too sacred, too precious.

It had evidently been taken many years before, when the lady was of her children's present age—a beautiful and finely finished miniature of an elegant woman. It seemed to Helen when she looked upon the face, as though she had looked upon it before; but where, and when, and how? At first she thought among the living, and the happy, but as the bewilderment passed, and she still gazed upon the pictured face, remembrances of a circumstance that long ago transpired, at home, when she was a little girl, came back freshly to her mind.

In the library, in a drawer of their father's writing desk, which stood wide open as though inviting her curiosity, she had found the likeness of a woman which she had thought then beautiful beyond all things. She held it carefully in her hands, and was going out from the room in search of her mother to show the splendid lady to her, when, lifting her eyes, she saw her father standing mute before her, and gazing on her with a look which terrified her, and the little painting dropped from her hand. The old man stooped and lifted it up, and with a word so harsh, so cruelly bitter, and of such inhuman anger as made her almost faint with fear, he sent her from the room; no persuasion could induce her, even after years were passed, to enter that library again.

The severe punishment attending this little act of childish curiosity had fixed the lady's likeness on Helen's mind in indelible colors. When, therefore, Julia showed this likeness to her, though she spoke no words save of admiration, a mortal chill overspread her frame, and the terror and grief of that distant day of humiliation seemed for a moment to overpower her.

Her emotion did not escape the sisters' notice, and when they said to her, "was she not lovely, Helen, our darling mother?"

the poor girl roused herself and said merely, "yes, most beautiful. So was my mother; but she was not of this proud style. I should know your mamma was a Southern lady by those magnificent eyes. I have no likeness of my sweet mother. What a joy this must be to you."

Long after, the remembrance of this lady was troubling the thought of Helen Wise. But at last, in the pressure of present duty and active exertion, it passed away.

If now, Helen, every day and every hour missed and mourned the absence of those bright creatures, in the letters which each week laid before her, she found a new comfort, a new source of joy. Anna wrote of her affection and interest with such words as she could never have spoken—cheering, and hoping and rejoicing with her. And Julia's correspondence girded her heart, a perfect wall of strength.

Return to the South, and release from that ambitious endeavor, had been in the highest degree beneficial to Anna Saxe. Her cough had disappeared, she was strong again; but they dared not return to the school and its duties, to the north and its winters again, and so their settled home was made in the family of one of the executors of their mother's will.

XIII.

WHEN Helen was eighteen years old, and the appointed time for her stay at — school had nearly passed, a new trial was put upon her.

The deformity which friends had hoped might be outgrown with years, had on the contrary increased with time, and great physical weakness attended it. Once she had been confined to a sick bed for weeks together, and her life was despaired of by those who attended her. If it had not been that so much anxiety was constantly on her mind—if the consciousness of her great duties had not so heavily pressed upon her, she had doubtless died; but when her breath had from exhaustion become scarcely perceptible, and her heart beat faintly as a dying infant's, and the physician could give no more hope, while Mrs. Hughes hung over the young girl with the sorrowing heart and

the grief of a mother, they brought Edwin, who would not be kept back, to her bed; they held him close to her that he might kiss her for the last time, and the embrace had been to her like an electric shock. It seemed as though this alone had power to call back the departing spirit to the mortal body of Helen Wise. She rallied from that moment and arose from the sick bed, whence none had thought to see her removed, save for burial.

The second time of attack happened on the occasion of her receiving a letter from one her father had appointed to watch over his children during his absence. It told her that the old man was no more. This was accompanied by a letter from a physician; it was dated and post-marked Naples, stating that Mr. Wise had died in that city of cholera, and had bidden him in his last sickness, in case the disease proved fatal, to acquaint his friends in America with the particulars of the fact.

Aside from the natural grief, which, strange as this may seem, was sincere, the daughter *felt*, on receiving this intelligence, the fact that she was now to be recognised, for what she had, indeed, ever virtually been, the only protector; in short, the parent of her brothers, was enough to distress and trouble her. Though she had been all in all to those children, it was a relief for her to fall back at times on the thought that they had a father. If she should die, (and the idea of death was not to that frail creature an abstraction,) he would be with them. If they should ever aspire or grow beyond her mild control, (it was a hard, unpleasant thought, yet she thought it,) *he* had an authority they would not dare to question. Now that he was dead, this stay, this ever-comforting recollection was gone, and the prospect of all that was before her, though at one point of view, his death might seem a relief, was at first too much—the sudden shock of weightiest recollection overpowered her.

From this prostrating sickness however, she again recovered; and then it was thought best that Helen should return with her brothers at once to Sunnyside; and it was her earnest wish to do so. There, it was appointed, the will was to be read, and in the preparatory school of the place, Edwin's education was to be particularly attended to.

XIV.

It was a sad going home. The nurse-woman, Margaret, who had accompanied the children from Sunnyside, returned with them; yet it was not the same household that had gone thence four years before. Margaret's hair was growing gray, and Helen looked full ten years older. Jamie was grown tall, well-shaped, and full of animal health; and Edwin, the love of every body, had increased in beauty as he had in stature. They came back, clad in mourning garments, to a desolate home.

It was so arranged that they should reach home by daylight, but it was growing late in the afternoon when they drove up the avenue to the house. An old woman who had been left in charge of the mansion, and who had lived in the family ever since the day David Wise brought his young bride home, and that was nearly twenty years ago,—this old woman met them at the door, and it was heartfelt pleasure to her when she took the footman's place and helped her young mistress from the carriage, that, though Helen looked very, very pale and sad, she neither wept nor fainted. And oh! what a joy and surprise it was to all. Jamie recognised old Agnes as well as the rest of them, and he suffered her to kiss him, which she did heartily over and over again, till her kind heart gave way as she had feared Helen would, and she who never wept, for one moment wept aloud.

There was nothing changed about this noble habitation. It seemed to Helen, as she passed through the neat, cheerful, handsomely furnished rooms, as though scarcely a day had passed since she went weeping from the place where her mother had lived and died. The gardens were never in finer order—even the birds, the pet canaries, sang the very notes they used to sing, and a globe, tenanted by gold-fish, occupied the same place that it had long ago.

But Helen knew that a change had come over all things, though at first it might not be perceptible. Years had done their work. The shade trees had waxed great and strong, the vines had hardened and spread far and wide in fruitful luxu-

riance, and tiny bushes were transformed into great flowering shrubs. The canaries were not those that sang so sweetly when Helen went away—there was a new generation of gold-fish in the globe—another order of change had taken place in Helen and Edwin, a change of which the spreading vines and heightened trees were but a type.

Before dark, the very night of their return, Helen walked in that portion of the garden, which her mother had been the first to call after her name. Her brothers were with her, but Helen looked, without speaking, on the fig tree, which still stood in the centre of that little bed ; its branches overshadowed all the ground where she had worked in childish sport and earnestness. For the first time since her coming home, though her heart had been every moment about to run over, she wept—for she remembered her mother's prophecy—and yet, despite her tears, an assurance of hope spoke to her from that tree. The withered, blighted trunk was now quite hid from sight—the deformity was not perceivable, neither had an observer been at all aware of its existence as he looked on the luxuriant foliage of the foreign tree.

Even thus might it be with her, as years passed on, so in spiritual strength and beauty might she continue to grow, so from her excellency might a pleasant shadow fall, in which the weary and the weak might repose. She read a gospel that night as she stood beside that tree—and she breathed a prayer there that was heard in heaven.

xv.

It was appointed that their father's will should be read to the children the morning after their arrival at Sunnyside, and at an early hour of the day, Mr. Warner, the legal friend of David Wise, accompanied by two elderly gentlemen, old acquaintances of the deceased, presented himself at the mansion.

The document was read from beginning to end without an interruption. That duty over, the gentlemen shortly after retired, and Helen was alone again. Alone—it was well that this was possible ; for the astonishment that had silenced could not long be powerful to control, and she had been more than a

young, solitary, helpless girl, to have borne up calmly, and, at the same time, wittingly, under the wrong that was done her.

By this will of David Wise, his estate was to pass into his daughter's hands, but conditionally, and not in her own right. If, in accordance with his command, she wedded with Alfred Lord before her twentieth birthday, Sunnyside was theirs conjointly, forever; if for any reason Helen should refuse the union, which had been agreed upon between said Alfred and David Wise years before, the property of the said David was to go to the said Lord, and the sons of David; and to his care these children were to be intrusted until Edwin was of age!

When he had finished reading the will, Mr. Warner, the lawyer, said to Helen, "I have made inquiries respecting the Alfred Lord here mentioned in this will; it appears that since he left your late father's house, he has resided in New York. For the few past years he has been a very successful shipping merchant. Six months ago he sailed for Asia; it was not then his intention to return until a year from now. Probably it would be advisable to acquaint him with the contents of this will at once."

"As you please," was Helen's sole reply; and how securely those coldly uttered words hid from the inquiring thoughts of her listeners the wail of anguish with which they were echoed through her soul.

The surprise that could not be spoken, the sorrow that found no words, the thought that did not hate, that could not love or revere the dead old man, how can I tell of it, or of that "wrestling with hidden pain!"

Prayer was not, at first, even a possibility—consolation in no form presented itself—death was the only thought, the only longing—for death, immediate and forever, seemed better than that life her father had apportioned. An awful sacrifice in either case of her decision must she offer up—her children, or herself, and which?

But this state of fear, and torture, and uncertainty, could not continue long. The spirit that had been so crushed and trodden upon, began at last to rise again, to give voice, but, reader, only in the ear of heaven, to its cry for mercy—and that cry at

last was answered in returning peace, and even hope, in recollection of the duties which were before her unperformed, in strength to bear, in courage to go onward.

XVI.

THE advancement Edwin made in his studies after he entered the preparatory school, was what might have been anticipated by those who knew how thorough a foundation had been laid while he studied with Helen.

He mastered his tasks not with a parrot-like celerity, nor with the plodding toil of the book-worm, but by the rapid and bold flights of true genius and real industry.

His tutor, young Dr. Harry Gray, was the son of poor parents. By dint of unceasing application he had risen high in the respect of his superiors; his perseverance and ability secured for him an honorable place at last in the very school which he had entered, possessed of nothing but talents and determination to succeed. He was in person, elegant; nature had done every thing for him, and he had not proved so ungracious as to neglect her gifts. He had improved them to the utmost by cultivating his mind, the only chivalrous act a man can do for nature. That he did not become a vain, proud man, when he stood thus even in his poverty, self-elevated above his fellows, was perhaps, because his ambition could not stop to trifle with vanity, nor be satisfied with the miserable delusions of vulgar pride. He had come out of the ranks of obscurity, self-sent by force of character and of mind; he knew that he stood on the earth for a purpose, and he worked to accomplish that.

Helen went not at all into society after her return to ———, but there were some, both old and young, who for love's sake, sought her in her own home at Sunnyside. That fate which was before her, robbed all the present of its happiness, and the future of its hope. The society of the young was not that which she needed; for in their thoughtless joys and gay lives, it was not given her to share; there was a thought omnipotent that obscured all peace—all that was given her to do, as she believed, was to hide herself away from the world—to die if she "might

be so blessed"—believing that there was never sorrow like unto her sorrow.

Yet very precious to her affectionate heart was the love of Edwin, her fair young brother. Into all his thoughts and hopes she could penetrate ; he laid them before her in his perfect confidence, and to him she was every thing, more than he could be to her. The depth of her sufferings he could not even understand, and could not share. Her bitterest thoughts, her loneliness, her grief, she could keep all this from him—but her joy, such as it was, she made his joy also.

Dr. Gray had been long desirous to pay his respects to the sister of Edwin, his favorite pupil—for the boy, acting the proverb that, "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," had awakened in the dreaming, secluded scholar, a curiosity and real desire to see and know this paragon.

It was natural that he should associate an idea of external loveliness with so much perfection, as seemed from Edwin's words embodied in Helen Wise. When he broke in upon the self-prescribed, rigid lines of duty, and divorced himself an hour from his books, it was by no means strange that he received a shock that was almost revulsion, when he was shown into her presence, so unlike was the being he saw to the beauty he had imagined.

It was long before the impression, produced in that moment when the vision of imagination fell before reality, passed away. Yet Dr. Gray did not (for Edwin's sake) discontinue his visits at Sunnyside. He also went not into the gay world, but was wasting—ah, I meant not that—keenly enjoying his life, in the busy pursuit of knowledge ; and it was pleasant for him sometimes to listen to the soft tones of Helen's voice, to enrich himself by converse with her always suggestive mind.

And all insensibly the gentleman was attracted, charmed and enchained, by another order of beauty, of which he became by degrees fully cognizant, for he discovered that Helen's moral and intellectual loveliness surpassed all that form and coloring, of which, in dreaming hours, he had mused ; but which, it must be confessed, he had never in his little intercourse with the world seen embodied.

XVII.

THAT he did not love Helen at once, nor at last, in the way that romancing men and maidens in the story books love, was, I acknowledge, a substantial fact. He admired and respected her, (it had been impossible for any person to have otherwise regarded her,) that he did, devoutly. But Harry Gray was a man who lived by sight, as well as faith.

Faith, I said, he had in Helen's merits in full abundance, but another love, a love of the imagination for beautiful women, had been with him from his boyhood, and though it had never been a frequent thought with him that he should one day follow the fashion of the world, and take to himself a wife, he had not, it must be confessed, been always without fancies personal, respecting such matters. That he never looked on Helen Wise in the light of a speculation, was most certain; though it was equally certain that the secluded Doctor had never heard of that strange proviso in the will of David Wise. He had reason to believe that her fortune was large, but the accumulation of money had never been his object in life, it had always been a third rate consideration with him, and the idea of taking a wife that he might fill his purse, was one that he could never have entertained. It was foreign to his whole nature.

With a deeper scorn than another could have felt for him, he would have looked on himself, had it been possible for him to think of marriage other than as a sacred thing. He never thought of worldly interests when he thought of her. He would have considered it profanation to associate such desires. Oh! God be thanked, there are still remaining on earth such noblemen!

Neither at the first, nor ever really (that is, in other than a dream-like way,) did Helen Wise dare to think of the learned young Doctor, save as her brother's instructor. He was, for this very office he held, a man fraught with uncommon interest to her—he was in her eyes more than a mere agreeable, accomplished gentleman.

By degrees, but unconsciously to herself, Harry Gray became far more to her. Though, when she herself began to suspect

this, she laid a double restraint on her heart—though, when she knew that he was day by day acquiring with her a deeper interest, she solemnly vowed that, for his sake, she would, come what might, live alone in the world, though her earnest and frequent prayers were offered that she might have strength to put away the beautiful idea which began to encroach so boldly that it terrified her—she was after all conquered—she loved!

And he to whom this pure, earnest devotion was given, knew it—he could not read amiss the happy truth that spoke from her innocent eyes, and her pure heart. But, he did not know it, reader, till he had gained power to interpret her thoughts and her words, by his own. What to him, then, was beauty, when his soul fell down before her soul, and recognised and loved it? What was any thing in the wide world to him then, but her *heart*, when he had given her his own! Floated no longer then through his fancy an image of rare loveliness, of perfect form and feature. He had reached a higher ground of vision—far more to him than this perishing beauty of earth, became the surpassing loveliness of her mind. When, from her own words he gathered that she loved him, there was not another desire in the world that he could have named. He had all in her that he panted for. Recognition of his genius; her pure, high intellect dreamed his worthy of association; riches, her love was as a sea of gold that could flow around him in perpetual light; honor, she revered him! Happiness, he found the full answer in her name!

But this was to him a short-lived joy. Helen only heard his declaration, and then forced to her lips utterances, which, while they assured him of her love, made him dumb.

The confession of his regard was what she had striven to not hear from his lips. She had continued deaf to his words, and blind to his gray eyes' questioning, so long as it was possible, and when the words were at last spoken, which in another case had made her glad beyond all imagination, she had only to speak the truth, and even the entreaty of devout love must then forever be over, for nothing on this earth could have induced Helen to give the children of her mother to the tender

mercies of a stranger—of Alfred Lord. Her love for them, and her sense of duty, conquered that other passion; then she was free.

Did she, therefore, put away her love? No! a thousand times, no! And what a joy was it to Helen to feel that this affection *need not* be resigned—dissociated from the thought of marriage it must for ever remain, but it was—it could never be less than

“A thing of beauty and a joy for ever.”

XVIII.

As though, while He suffered her to be so tried, the Father of Mercy graciously regarded His child, seemed the next incident in her life's history.

Once only had Harry Gray's declaration of love been permitted—once only could it be answered. The sore disappointment endured, and its freshest sting removed, the young man dared to trust himself again in her companionship, and Helen, strong in her righteous will, dared receive him. They were thus together, when Helen received the following letter from Julia Saxe:

“I had hoped, when I next wrote you, dear, dear Nelly, to surprise and please you with the news of my letter. And now I *must* surprise, but it is with tears of grief. My sister, our beautiful Anna, is no longer with me—she is gone to the ‘far country’—Helen, she is dead. And to you I will say what I could not speak to another—she perished in her youthful loveliness and gentleness, of that most sad disease which God ever puts on woman's nature—of a broken heart. She was never, you well know, so strong as I, but she had, of late years, been more healthful than her childhood promised, and was so well in spirits, so exceeding beautiful! We had a friend—he was the hope of her life—how well all went with her in those happy days! But he was taken away—and all was over with her. I would have brought her to the North, to you, dear Helen. Or I would have gone anywhere in the wide world to have averted

from her that doom of melancholy, which, if it overshadowed, would, I knew, destroy her. She struggled with her sorrow when she saw how it troubled me, but could not hear to my proposition of leaving Charleston, where he died—it was a struggle that could not last—she died in it.

“I cannot live here any longer, Helen. The place is consecrated by the saddest remembrances. I have seen all that was nearest to me perish here. I cannot bear it longer, and there is not a friend in the wide world whom, in this loneliness and bereavement, I can so gladly, so trustingly seek, as you. Helen, dear Helen, we are without father or mother, or sister, in this world. We know and love each other—let us *be* always the sisters that we are in spirit—let my home only be with your home—I would give all my fortune for a friend. It has seemed to me always as though I had a right to call you by another name than friend. I have never felt attracted towards others as towards you from the first day I saw you at school—and that was long before we knew each other, you will recollect. That impulse which drew me then so irresistibly towards you, draws me now: but for you I should be, indeed, desolate. To-morrow, or it may not be till the next week’s to-morrow, I shall be with you, for I leave this place at once, never, I believe, to return to it. Adieu,

JULIA.”

When Helen had finished the letter, she turned to Dr. Gray, saying:

“You must come to Sunnyside the next time, to welcome my friend, Julia Saxe. I have told you so often about her that she will not seem a stranger. But you have no idea of her after all. She is the most beautiful woman I ever beheld. You are an admirer of beauty—you will be astonished when you see her, for peerless as she is in person, her mind is the fit occupant of such a casket. It seemed to me, when I parted with those twin-sisters, that they were the only really perfect creatures in the world. I should have prophesied them the most happy destiny. How true that saying is, Harry, ‘what we are we know, but not what we shall be.’”

"Are you sure, Helen, that there is in the world such a thing as happiness?"

"Yes, I am sure of it—but I believe it is not to be found till we have conquered our own wills, and perfectly submitted ourselves to the will of Heaven. Until that happens we are looking, and longing, and striving, but when we have a living faith in Him, we are at peace."

"But the decrees of Heaven, Helen, seem so passing strange. From my youth up I have striven and labored, and done what was right, as far as I knew how—and I assure you I have not followed my own counsel in discovering and striving to do my duty. And you, what a care has been on you always! You, too, have suffered, and have nobly borne—you have devoted yourself to others, and now, when we might find our earthly reward in each other's affection, see what a barrier rises before us! Oh, it is strange."

"Yes, dear Harry, 'passing strange,' if there were not life in the fact, that we are proved through suffering. Strange, if we did not remember or know that our home is not in the earth, that we are all, all strangers and pilgrims here. In another way than we think of now, God may yet smile upon and be merciful unto us, while we remain on earth. You may find another love—it is by no means improbable—and I in my brothers may yet be sufficiently blest."

"Helen! You have not loved as I have loved, or you could not speak thus calmly."

"Harry," she answered, in a solemn, earnest voice, that haunted him long after, "I have sealed up, and can never bring to light the happy dreams I've had. I have struggled with, and *conquered* a passion that was idolatry—but I love you yet. I shall always love you; and I think it no sin, for spirits may so love. Think how much I could confide in you, when I dare speak thus. God knows how I have wrestled—how my heart has been crushed in the wrestling. He gave me strength at last—do not take that strength away by speaking another word of this. There is such utter hopelessness in the idea of our union, that it is best to never advert to it in any way. We are

friends for ever—it must suffice us. Let us submit without a murmur.”

“Amen, then, in God’s name! But it is a fearful baptism into suffering, Helen,” he said, and went away.

XIX.

A FEW evenings after this, Dr. Gray was again at Sunnyside. There had been an arrival—Julia Saxe had come.

A splendid woman was she, indeed, as Helen had foretold; tall and majestic as a young monarch—of perfect figure and a perfect face. The harmony existing between her personal and mental loveliness was exquisite, and most indifferent and pre-occupied must the heart have been that did not throb with pleasure, (if not with a deeper emotion,) on beholding her.

Julia’s coming was a great joy to Helen, and Heaven knows her sad heart needed a human comforter and support in those days. She needed a household friend—a living, understanding, conscious friendship, such as Julia alone could give; and in her thankfulness that this was vouchsafed, she bent down more humbly and submissively in her surpassing meekness, to her destiny. And Julia was more than a companion for Helen’s leisure hours. Jealous people, who called her proud and haughty, would have been astonished could they have seen the graceful bending of her lofty figure, as she joined Jamie in his sports, striving in every way, for hours together, to amuse him. At the first he was stubborn—proof against all her advances—but she conquered him with kindness, and he loved her, then, as he did Helen; she painted, and sketched, and wrote, and sang in his room, thus almost usurping her friend’s place, and when Jamie wearied of all in-door amusements, she would walk or drive with him; and between them both, these self-elected sisters rarely suffered him from their sight, for they knew if he passed beyond their control, what the result would inevitably be.

No, no, Julia Saxe was no garden rose—no idle ornament, no useless drone in the hive; though all who looked upon her must have felt, for the first time,

“How perfect and divine a thing,
A woman can be made.”

She was a missionary in Helen's house, and she did a missionary's work!

Harry Gray spoke from the fulness of his heart, from the very height of his hope, when he asked the hand of Helen Wise in marriage. He could say from his soul that he had never seen one who could compare with her. But when he looked at these two friends together, though he did not wonder at and condemn his first love, he was conscious, as time passed on, of a change therein. And then, oh, reader, it became to him a fact almost joyous, that fate kept his hand still free, himself unbound!

But condemn not, friend, in haste. That joy was only felt at a time when Helen was not near; there was no gayety in his heart when he saw that frail, bending creature, and looked on the pleading earnestness, the meekness, and sadness of her pale, expressive countenance.

When he had sought her for his wife, there was a struggle to be made, that rendered him at first less ardent in his protestations. There was nothing to excite, nothing to bring words to his lips, that a calm, reasonable man would not utter to a calm, sensible woman. Passionless and pure was his love, and had it been successful in its pleading, it would have remained steadfast, deep and pure forever. Now he had not to overcome a fault of sight, in order to fall irrevocably in love with mind. Peerless in her loveliness, Harry could only confess to himself that Julia Saxe was grander than his ideal, more beautiful than his boyhood's dream of womanly loveliness.

But there were others who thought much the same thoughts, and more than one aspired to her hand, but the lady kept her heart closely shut against all these. She was accustomed to admiration, to words of flattery, to the vows of men; never but once had these made an impression on her mind, and then the impression had been reversed by the discovery of unworthiness in the person with whom she had nearly allied herself. It was not likely, therefore, that she would be easily charmed or beguiled by honeyed words. If, from the first, she felt interested in the friend and tutor of a boy so promising as Edwin Wise, it was only because Helen spoke to her so warmly of his ex-

cellence and his talents. If she put aside, in a measure, the reserve and dignity which so distinguished her, when none but he and the loved inmates of Sunnyside were by, it was certainly for no other reason than respect for his abilities and confidence in his virtue. His coming aroused no other emotion than that of friendliness, but his going never saw him lessened in her respect or admiration.

It was not thus with Harry. Her presence was a fascination to him. It aroused all his powers—he could lead no half life, could think no half thoughts when she was by. In conversation with her, his powers were all aroused, and his words were never more eloquent or earnest than when she was near.

When Helen Wise perceived this, she did not imagine the depth of Harry's interest in her friend, though to any other than herself it had proclaimed itself in his exclamation—"Miss Saxe is certainly the most perfect work in creation; she is transcendent—a perfect wonder to me, Helen."

"She is all that and more, Harry," was the fervent response, and Helen looked upon her companion with a clear look, that he interpreted—"She knows and is satisfied with it, that I am now madly and irretrievably in love!"

"Edwin's teacher is a real nobleman, and he is a genius, too—where did he come from, Helen?" was Julia's exclamation, when Harry had left the house one evening with more of hopelessness and humility than had ever entered his heart before.

There was a proud thrilling of Helen's soul as she replied, "his father was a common sailor, but he had a sort of pride in his fine boy, and gave him as much education as he could afford, which was just enough to prove a stimulant to such a lad. He persevered through all the difficulties which beset him. You see what he is, Julia—what he will be, it is not difficult to imagine."

"That is noble! he has a right to be proud. I think he is very proud, don't you?" was the answering exclamation—and a faint color was perceptible on her cheek, which showed she felt her words. And Julia thought, as she uttered them, "Helen will believe I'm surely in love! Heigho! perhaps—hum—um."

"She will rejoice, the angel," murmured Harry, when he

pondered on sweet words that rung in his ear through all one night—"she will be thankful that she kept so firm."

"I wish that Helen knew what I am thinking of," thought Julia Saxe, in those same hours. "Thank Heaven, that I have yet faith enough left in man to—to—to love Harry Gray?"

And in those same still hours, Helen knelt and said, "Oh, Father in Heaven, give me light! Let thy smile beam in that way I must tread—and give me strength to tread therein." And a light came out from Heaven, it glowed over a stern and rugged path, but, as she looked upon the thorny way, Helen grew strong and calm, and she blessed God for the guidance.

XX.

THEY were together, one evening, alone, the scholar and the beauty. Helen was away in a sick chamber; for, during many days, poor Jamie had been very ill. He was now past all danger, but Helen rarely left him for a moment—indeed, with all his fondness for Julia, he would endure no other nurse but his sister.

Harry had brought with him his sketch-book, according to promise, to show his drawings to the fair critic. They consisted mostly of scenery sketches, taken from many parts of the country through which he had travelled, chiefly on foot, during vacations; of women, which certainly were ideals, for there was a glory and beauty not of earth imparted to them, and glorifying them, and of flowers. Among these, not the ideals, but paintings of real women, was a head of Helen Wise. It was finely executed, and true to the life. Separated from the deformed body, as it was, a casual acquaintance might not have recognised it—and even Julia was astonished when she observed the perfect semblance, yet the surpassing beauty and grace in the shape of the noble head, and in the profile.

"I must have this," she said, when she had exhausted her praise. "I want it for a miniature. Will you give it to me?"

Harry hesitated a moment, but then said—"Take all the rest, I cannot spare that, Miss Saxe," for he remembered when the

picture was taken, and what different thoughts were in his mind then—very different, indeed, were they from those which now made such tumult in his heart. Julia raised her eyes, but they drooped before his gaze, and she began hurriedly to turn over the remaining papers.

There was a picture of Niagara: under the exquisitely colored sketch Harry had written "Eternity." As he handed this to his companion, he said—

"The sketch is worth all the rest—all, I mean, except that head of Helen. That, of course, surpasses the others inasmuch as humanity takes precedence of all insensate things. I could never paint another picture with such wild tumult of thought as oppressed me when this was made. I had but just come from 'within the veil' of Niagara, and my soul was drenched with the awful majesty of nature."

"This artistic power you have is beautiful," responded Julia, "it is unrhymed poetry—an artist *must* be a poet."

"Yes, necessarily; though he is often only a silent poet. But Niagara chants its own divine hymns. They have no need of human interpretation—they do not admit it. Books cannot go out from that college. The student must himself stand in that divine presence in order to learn. It is a subject on which words which approach the truth sound too like rhapsody to be spoken. You have been at Niagara?"

"Not as yet."

"Then you cannot understand how I should have written Eternity underneath the picture. You should stand on the island that divides the two falls at a point where nearly all of each is visible. You should see the unchanging beauty, and hear the everlasting pæan, to understand it. You will not know how much there is in life till you go there, but depend upon it, you will feel all your senses to be opened then anew, as though you had just entered, as it were, into life."

"Yet so many speak of their disappointment at the falls. How can it be that people look so differently on such a scene? I do not comprehend it."

"Don't look to see the waters gushing from the clouds, and I know you will not be disappointed. What new visions of

beauty you will have! I almost envy you the first visit. One of the days that I was at Niagara, a strong wind swept the continually rising incense-clouds far down the river, and I could only think, as I looked on the ghost-like procession, of the resurrection of the Last Day. Troop after troop then came up from that roaring cavern beneath the precipice—the sun was high in the heavens, and it seemed the very power that pronounced eternal banishment upon them. As the day drew near its close, and the sun came nearer earth, it appeared as though the mighty monarch were drawing nigh to the other hosts of spirits, he called them up to his embrace and they were glorified. Oh! it was like a vision of Judgment! Then, the next morning, there was a most brilliant rainbow, springing from the dazzling whiteness of the American fall, and arching halfway across the great river. And then the harmony and sublimity of sound! Do not talk of disappointment and Niagara in one breath, Miss Saxe. You will wonder, when you see for yourself, that the words could ever have been joined together. I'm sure the match wasn't made in Heaven."

As he spoke so fervently, Harry turned another picture—he paused abruptly as he looked upon it, but in a moment mastered his embarrassment, and laid it before his companion. It was a likeness of herself—as perfect a semblance as could be imagined—it was named "Light."

"You are partial to symbols," said Julia, as she cast her eyes upon it. "But you have erred in naming this. Let me suggest another name."

"I would not change it for the world—your suggestion in this matter, pardon me, would be of very little worth."

"But I insist—call it a weed, rather. If Niagara and disappointment must not be spoken together, neither shall this desecration be permitted. We both judge from knowledge; have a care, or I shall call you an enthusiast, Dr. Gray."

"Any thing you will—but *this* is Light; because light beams from it, speaks in it, lives with it! Light! light! it is all we need in this world—and how little of it we have! Oh, angel of light, if I tell you that I am in darkness, thick darkness if you do not smile upon me, will you feel any pity?"

"Most assuredly I should deplore such a woful mishap—that is, if I could conceive of its reality. But I cannot—you speak of darkness when God's world is full of glory."

"To the loving, yes—if the one who is all to them does not bring a cloud over the heaven to obscure the sun."

"You believe in this sympathetic power—this ability of one person to affect the *life-long* happiness of another?"

"Yes, and you believe it, too! You *know* it, lady! Teach me to woo you that I shall not offend—I knew not how to speak."

"Harry!"

"I say teach me to speak as you would have a man speak who loves you devotedly, madly—who will be undone if you will not be all to him!"

"Harry Gray!"

"Yes—I, even I dare entreat—teach me—"

He paused, he looked, in doubt, in astonishment. He saw her smile, saw her tears, and then he kissed her hands, and flung himself at her feet, and he too wept, for he was beside himself with joy.

Not so had he sued for the love of Helen Wise. Not to this measure had he been moved when he asked her love; not thus, in his gratitude, did he bow down before her and bless and almost worship her!

True, indeed—"we know what we are, but not what we shall be." In the placid, tranquil, diligent, retiring scholar, who had dreamed that such a pent-up fountain of passion existed! He himself, till he knew Julia Saxe, did not suspect it—but how it did burst into glowing life that blessed day when she promised to be his!

XXI.

WHEN Julia told Helen of her betrothal, a sudden surprise might have been betrayed by her listener. Schooled as she was in trial, Helen Wise had not yet acquired positive control over the emotions of her heart, or the features of her face—and though she had altogether put away every thought of Harry

save as a friend, it was no trifling thing for her to hear that he had so soon wooed another, and that Julia was his promised bride. It was no little thing for her to say so tenderly as she did—"God bless you." It was no little matter for her to stand up in her weakness, with but Jamie and Edwin for her own, and that dark phantom of future wretchedness before her. But she did so, without paling, without trembling, without tears; though a fiercer struggle never went on for a few moments in any woman's breast.

Afterwards the time came when she could think, and Helen had not then one hard thought of Harry Gray. The surprise she really felt gave way to earnest joy, for she loved him too sincerely not to rejoice in the rich treasure he had gained. Her love for Harry was still as great as—Julia's! Yet she could cherish it without sin, though she and he were both bound now by other ties. Individual and intense that love was, but it was such as an angel might have cherished—and she never had for him any other.

Julia's intention of making the North her future home was now, of course, become a fixed one. New England, Harry's native home, must henceforth be her adopted country, and if its storms and snows were but symbols of their united fate, it seemed to the noble woman as still the best of all fortunes, because it was to be shared with him.

Until her marriage day, which was appointed the first day of June—that being the month of vacation—she continued to reside with Helen. To have seen the busy, cheerful way in which Helen assisted in those preparations for marriage, none would have imagined all that had been in her heart.

It was with infinite embarrassment, and real pain, that Harry Gray spoke to her of the change in his hopes, and in his plans. He did not speak a word on the subject, till she congratulated him upon his brilliant conquest, and wished him every blessing. And he wept while she did so, but her voice was firm, and her eyes undimmed by tears. Talk of heroism! Could the voice of woman gather strength and courage to speak of woman's victories, her endurance, her sorrows, her genuine valor and courage, in moments when she sees the hope of her life fading

away, never, never, never to return again, it would speak of that to which the world would listen in an almost unbelieving wonder.

In the beautiful parlor at Sunnyside the bridal ceremony was performed. A bright and glorious morning it was on which to register a marriage vow, but to Helen it seemed, as she saw her two dearest friends on earth going from her in their joy, as though the heavens so intensely blue, so clear, were never before so distant.

Oh, our days of sorrow should be the cloudy, stormy, winter days, for the Spirit of Mercy seems then nearer and more accessible. Nature in her gloom appears to sympathize with us in our trouble—there is no mocking voice in the moaning wind, no scornful laugh at our weakness and helplessness echoing through the dull and dreary clouds.

XXII.

THE bridal party had hardly gone from Sunnyside, when a letter bearing a foreign post-mark was handed Helen, and she read therefrom as follows:—

“TO MISS HELEN WISE :

“*Dear Madam*—I have recently received, through your legal adviser, John Warner, a copy of your late father’s will, in which I find he has made good the promise given me when I was a youth under his protection; you were an infant then. In the thought and hope that this agreement might be carried out when you were of age, I have never sought another companion, in what has at times seemed to me a very lonely pilgrimage. I remember your mother, beautiful and gentle, and always most kind—I long to know the daughter, whom I am sure she loved so well. I shall sail from Liverpool for Boston in a short time. I scarcely need say to you that my return is hastened by the receipt of the letter above mentioned. Please speak kindly of me to your brothers, and believe me, dear madam,

“Yours, with sincere respect,

“ALFRED LORD.”

That it was not ignorance which prompted this cruelly civil note, Helen was well aware. If, therefore, she flung it from her, and trampled it, and for that day at least forgot all things save her own miserable prospects, would you wonder? Or, if she wept alone, and hid herself from all human beings, that none might see or guess her sorrow, would that have been a strange procedure? Yet she did not this. She folded the letter, she laid it away, she conversed calmly with the visitors who came that day to the mansion, and then at twilight went with her brothers to the river a fishing.

And at night when Jamie slept, and Edwin read with her, she listened attentively to him; but when she was at last alone, she surely gave up then? She could not any longer have exercised control over herself? Ay, but she did, my reader. She prayed as she was wont—she slept through all the night, and the morning saw her as composed as ever. You will think, then, that she was cold-hearted; resigned, because she had no spirit to be otherwise. It was so; *resigned, because she had no spirit to be otherwise*. She had wrestled, and won that peace of God which passes all understanding, and it was enough.

XXIII.

Edwin had already entered on his collegiate course, and in his mind had fully decided on his future profession—had, indeed, made his wish known to old Dr. Sympson, who was almost as a father to him, of entering his office as a student as soon as he had graduated. Very frequently the youth found himself in the old physician's surgery, and an observer might have smiled or wondered to hear the gray-headed man entering into the dry details of his business, or lecturing the lad on the elements of his profession so earnestly.

More than once, Edwin had driven out with the Doctor, making professional visits with him, and so it was nothing very wonderful that the chatty old man should one day make a tax on his young friend's time, by begging him to accompany him to Salem, to attend a patient there. Regularly for a week he had driven to that town, and it had become such a weary old

story, he said, that he wanted some one to speak with by the way.

There was an unusually thoughtful expression in the Doctor's eyes, as he fixed them on Edwin, and made this simple request; and the lad, who had listened with considerable interest to the account which his friend had given of the patient, gladly made ready for the drive.

All the way to Salem the Doctor seemed to be in a most strange, unusual mood. Twice he began speaking with Edwin, but paused again abruptly as he had commenced—and finally, he drove on in silence, without further attempting a conversation, to the lodging of his patient.

Him they found in a much better condition than had been anticipated; the fever was abated, the distressing pains in the head and limbs were passed—and his mind, which for several days had been delirious, was now quite calm and rational. He recognised the physician, and thanked him for his kind attendance, begging that he would now continue alone in his service. He was quite cheerful, and spoke pleasantly of his speedy recovery, and of the necessity he was under of continuing his journey soon as possible, for he was a stranger in a strange land. The Doctor remained for an hour with his patient, enlivening him with his cheerful conversation, and making all things comfortable about him, then promising to return the following day, he withdrew with Edwin.

"It is one of the severest cases of that kind of fever I ever had," said he, when he turned his horse's head homewards—and he proceeded to detail more fully to his attentive listener the state in which he found the patient at first, the medicines he had used, and the effect they had produced.

But this loquacity did not last long—the greater part of the homeward drive was pursued in silence, till at last, as they came in sight of Sunnyside, the old man suddenly looked up, and full in Edwin's face, exclaiming—"I have discovered a secret, boy."

The lad returned a surprised and questioning glance, which was at once answered with the abrupt and startling announcement—

"Your father is not dead. If he was ever a living man, he is sick at Salem now—him we have visited."

The poor young fellow was struck dumb with astonishment as he heard this. He looked upon his informant, not with the glad, bright look of one who has heard joyous tidings, but in a bewildered, fixed amaze, to which the Doctor immediately answered—"I heard it all from his own lips while he was delirious, else I should never have recognised him—now, since I have heard him speak of things which establish his identity, I know that it is he."

It was to the boy a bitter, grievous, as well as most unanticipated announcement, reader. To find in that miserable, diseased wretch, a FATHER! The remembrance of all that David Wise had been as a parent in the days when he lived at Sunnyside with his family, was not pleasant to Edwin; young as he was when the last separation had taken place between them, the recollection of what he had been was most vivid still, and the bare mention of the father's name had aroused thoughts which the youth would much rather have left slumbering for ever.

"Wait a moment," said Dr. Sympson, kindly, as Edwin was about to leap from the carriage, for they had reached his house. "Wait a moment. You must go to Salem again with me before you say a word of this to any human being. I may mistake—at all events, it is better to wait. Will you go again with me to-morrow? I think it would be safe to speak with him then on the subject—if it does not seem to be, we can then wait longer."

"I will," was the scarcely audible answer of the youth; and he walked slowly towards his home.

He went at once into his own apartment. He dared not look on Helen—he had no heart to devote the evening, as he was wont to do, to Jamie. But, imagine if he slept all night! What an unspeakable relief it was to him when the daylight at last penetrated his room! As that constant thought, *his father living*, pressed upon him, it took never for an instant a hue of joy. It was *no* gratification to think that he who had never been a father to his children, who had wilfully clouded the life

of his idolized sister with that binding injunction of marriage with a stranger—who had deserted his young children, leaving them in the care of others for good or ill, as it might chance, it was no joy to him to think of such a return—and no great marvel this! Natural affection is by no means instinct. For a thinking mind there is no such thing as love for a tyrant—a hard, loveless, unsocial, oppressive man, though he be a father; there may be interest close and constant, there *must* be while the tie continues to exist; whether this interest is of the most humiliating, bitter, peace-destroying kind, or, beyond all things, pleasant and sustaining, it must depend upon the human, active agency of spirit communing with spirit—the affection between parent and child is always intelligent, sentient—it is and must be of the heart and mind, and of no other character.

XXIV.

WHEN Dr. Simpson, accompanied by Edwin, again saw his patient, he thought that it would be quite safe for him to convince himself of that which he so much suspected. After his professional visit was over, he remained by the old man's bedside, watching him quietly, for a few moments. At last he said—

“Mr. Wise, I have brought Edwin to visit you.”

It was so simply said, that the sick man looked up, and was scarcely startled at hearing himself called by name. His gaze fixed a moment on Edwin, then his eyes closed, and he spoke, but so confusedly and low, that his words were undistinguishable.

“Mr. Wise,” said the Doctor, again, “do you not remember Edwin, your son? This is he. I have brought him from Sunnyside to visit you.”

These words, slowly and distinctly enounced, roused him completely—he sat up in the bed and fixed his bloodshot eyes again on his son, and long and anxiously scanned his features. A mortal paleness overspread the youth's face as he met that gaze; a hundred emotions were struggling in his breast, as he looked on that age-worn face—at last, mightily struggling with

his own spirit, he murmured "Father," and the tears began to gather in his eyes.

"Yes—it must be," was the answer to that word. "You are very like Emma. I did not think to see you so much grown. You are almost a man. How long the time has been!"

"They told us you were dead, father," said Edwin.

"Dead, dead!" exclaimed he. "Yes, I have been dead! I died years ago. I'm not a living man—my soul is in the torments of hell. Nothing can chain it! Don't look at me so—away! I didn't come here to seek you—off—off!" He attempted, in the delirium that now possessed him, to leap from the bed, but the Doctor, who had attentively watched the change in his patient, was swifter than he, and prevented.

The excitement and conflicting emotions aroused in the sick man brought on a relapse; for a week little thought of his recovery was entertained—but, at last, owing to the unremitted attention of those about him, the disease was conquered—but the patient was left weak as an infant.

It was during his slow recovery that Edwin, who was become a constant watcher beside his bed, for the first time proposed his parent's removal to Sunnyside. But of this the old man would not hear a word. He expressed, however, now, and for the first time, a wish to see his other children.

Helen, who had been acquainted with his most unlooked-for return to the living, had waited expectantly and anxiously for many reasons for this summons, and it was with a satisfaction that, after all, was greater than the painful thoughts which would suggest themselves, that she set out for Salem to visit him.

Most strange it was—of his children, Jamie, the idiot-born, was the only one who recognised his father in the sick man who awaited their coming. When, with his arm locked in the trembling Helen's, they went up to David Wise, and the poor girl, remembering that she was his child, bent over the ghost of a man and kissed him, the poor fellow's eyes fixed with wild and startled gaze upon the features of the father; a change came over his countenance, it lost its placid calmness, and rage,

and hate, alone were visible. With wild and threatening gestures, and wrathful voice, he exclaimed against the invalid, until his watchful sister, who had not for years seen him so excited, led him gently away, and returned again alone to the sick chamber.

"Helen, they tell me you are not married," was his salutation, when she came once more and sat down beside him.

"It is true, father," she replied. "We heard that you were not living; when the will was opened, Mr. Warren made its contents known to—to the man they chiefly concerned. He was away then, and has not yet returned."

"Was it your intention to marry him?"

"Yes; for I could not bear that *my mother's children*, her dear Jamie and Edwin, should be left to the care of a stranger. Poor Jamie, I could have done far more than that you required for his sake."

"When is Alfred Lord coming back?"

"He wrote that he should come this month."

"Then you can be married here, and I will see it done before I die," he said, in a tone that was almost exultant.

"It's a great match for *you*. I couldn't do too much for Alfred Lord, either; though it's doing no great things to give him —*you*, to be sure. He has rendered me great services—it was only just that I should through you give my property to him. I knew, of course, that you would comply with my desire."

There was only a gentle inclination of the head in answer to this speech, for Helen could not trust herself to answer a word.

"I was carried among the dead from the hospital in Naples," resumed the old man. "The cholera was raging there. The person I made my agent for transacting business matters, was also dead when I recovered. He had doubtless written your lawyer as directed. But I have written since—at least think I did—I meant it—perhaps the letter miscarried."

"Father," said Helen, resolved, in spite of all he had said, to make one more appeal before she left him that day. "Father, *must* that will be carried into effect? When you recover, how will it be?"

"I have set my heart on your marrying him. I shall not get well."

"If your life *is* spared, dear father, and I cannot promise to be *his* wife, how will it be?"

"I tell you the marriage must go on—I have sworn it—and, besides, you would otherwise be left a beggar."

Helen made no reply to this, she merely took his hand in hers an instant, and went from him without uttering a word; but, if ever a beggar's life was coveted, it was by that daughter, as, joining her brothers, she returned home again.

XIV.

THE second visit Helen made her father, was after a lapse of many days.

Harry and Julia Gray had returned from their bridal tour—those four eventful weeks had been full of happy days for them, had opened to the vision of each such pure, bright depths of soul, as gave them confidence and perfect faith forever in each other.

When Helen told her friend the story of her father's most unlooked for return, and his unalterable determination of remaining in Salem while he lived, and of the unflinching will with which he pronounced her doom of marriage, Julia expressed her determination of at once proceeding to see the old man. She would argue with him herself, she said, and she would make him die as a Christian man should, at peace, and in love with his children.

Thus it was that Julia and Helen went alone one day to visit David Wise.

When they went into his apartment they found him alone and sleeping, and they went softly back to the ante-chamber to wait till he should waken.

They sate conversing there in an under tone, when suddenly Julia's voice was raised in a cry of terror. The old man had risen unheard, and before they were aware, he stood in the doorway, gazing full upon them with those bright eyes, in which a serpent-like power of fascination lurked. Julia smiled at her

own cry, even as she uttered it, though, in truth, there was something terrific in the emaciated, wild appearance David Wise presented.

He entered the room, after a moment's hesitation, and sat down directly facing Julia, looking upon her cautiously and earnestly, as though he were afraid of her. Soon he arose and drew nearer to her, while she, striving to shake off that disagreeable feeling which oppressed her, as she returned his gaze, endeavored to enter into conversation with him, but the old man would neither answer nor take his gaze from her. At last he seemed satisfied, and turning from the beautiful woman to his own poor child, he exclaimed with a horrid oath—

"Tell me that woman's name!"

"Yes, papa," said Helen quickly. "Her name is, was, Julia Saxe—she is my very dearest friend."

"Get out then—away with you—are you fiends that you come here to make me mad?"

"Why, we only came to visit you a little while, dear papa," said Helen, soothingly.

"Do you want to kill me?" he added, unmindful of her interruption. "Go off, I say! you—you—*what* are you here for? Did I ever seek you out? Did I ever claim *you*?"—pointing to Julia—"for my child? Tell me, did your mother send you here?"

"My mother is an angel in heaven," was the answer made to this outbreak.

"Well, I tell you—I *will* tell you!—hush! there—I'm going to swear it. I say, I swear it. Does it content you to know that? *She* was my wife once, and there was you, and the other she called Anna. It was twenty years ago I came from there, and if I left her to marry another woman, poor fool she was indeed to marry me—wasn't it enough that I *did* it? Haven't I been paid for it over a hundred times?"

Poor creature! he was speaking to dumb witnesses and listeners. To that shameful confession of sin, wrung from a tortured conscience, they could make no answer. Though conviction of the truth of his declaration flashed like lightning upon them—though to Helen the mystery of that portrait of the

mother of—*her sister* was now made clear as by a lightning flash—though to Julia the deep grief that had bowed her beautiful mother, after years of suffering, to the grave, was all explained; it was to neither of them a moment of rejoicing, when they knew that the fond name by which they had loved to call each other, was indeed a name that they were entitled to use. They could have wept their lives away as they hearkened to the acknowledgment of guilt which that white-haired man, standing on the verge of the grave, found himself compelled to make to his innocent, guileless children.

They left him that day quite forgetful of the object of their visit, and without speaking, without a parting embrace; utterly voiceless they returned to their homes; but when *they* parted, Julia clasped the little trembling form of Helen in her arms for one moment, whispering, "Nelly, my own dear, sweet sister, kiss me once more;" and they separated, bearing each other's kisses with them; separated in sorrow, but in love as deep as that sorrow, to keep that secret with them to their dying day—to bear it with them to the grave!

XXVI.

ON the morning of the next day, when Helen entered James' room, as was her custom, to awaken him, she was startled and alarmed to find it vacant, for it was some time before his usual hour of waking. Turning to the screened corner where his bed stood, she saw that it had not been at all used in the night; yet was Helen sure that she had seen him go into his chamber when she went to her own. What could it mean? Nothing of the kind had ever occurred before—no infant was ever guarded with more watchful, constant care than Jamie Wise had been, by the sister who was as a mother to him. What could this strange and most unusual occurrence mean?

Through the house and the gardens and the grove Helen went, at first alone, and then with the rest of the alarmed household, but she found no trace of him. Then they began a search for him through the town, while Helen awaited the result of their seeking in a state of agonized suspense indescribable.

Let us look into the silence and the shadow of the awful night that had passed.

Jamie had, as Helen felt persuaded, gone to his room a little time before she retired, but, buried in her own thoughts, she had forgotten to see if he slept, ere she herself closed her eyes in slumbering.

When all was still at Sunnyside, the idiot boy went out with stealthy step from his chamber, and through the house unheard. He was armed, and mounted on the fleet horse which a neighbor had turned out to pasture, in little time, and away he went with lightning speed, on that road which he had once before taken, when he went with Helen and Edwin on a visit, which had haunted him ever since it was made.

It was midnight; night without a visible star, when Jamie reached the house he sought in Salem. As he approached the dwelling on foot, a man came from thence—a person who had been staying with the invalid till that late hour. The boy saw him close the door, and a moment after, with a short, bitter laugh, his hand was laid upon the lock, his feet were on the stairs, and he stood alone in the room with his father!

The physician, or whoever the person was, had remained with the invalid till he slept. Had his first-born son come to maintain like watch?

If the aged slumberer had awakened, then, he had seen a youthful form bend close above him, had felt the warm, quick breath of Jamie on his cheek—had seen two brilliant, savage eyes fixed, peering through the night-gloom, upon him! Had he listened, his ear would have caught the repeated, low, and half-demoniac laugh. There!—there! if his eyes had just opened, then, they would have seen the uplifted hand of the once idolized boy hovering, only for a moment, over his devoted head.

But—the poor old man, he did not waken, did not hear—he knew nothing of it. His life went out, when the small, slender hands, which Helen had oft-times clasped in her own, wound round his neck! There was only a momentary resistance, then all was over.

When the morning came, they who had the sick man in their charge, found that their aid was no longer to be sought—for

none were needed *then* to guard and nurse old David Wise. The idiot son had usurped their place—they found him chuckling in joy by the bedside of his murdered father.

It was near noonday before the tidings of this dreadful tragedy reached Sunnyside; and it was poor Edwin's lot to speak of the awful facts to Helen. When she saw him coming home, at last, she went out to meet him, for her heart was breaking with fear for Jamie. The brother and sister met, but neither spoke. There was something in the troubled, wretched expression of Edwin's eyes, as he looked on her, that choked the words Helen would fain have spoken, in their utterance. When they had entered the house again, Edwin, vainly striving to speak, calmly, said—

"Helen, could you bear it, if you knew that you were never to see our poor, dear Jamie, again?"

"Tell me! what is it?" she answered, with such earnestness that it had sounded in any but Helen Wise, a harsh command, "My Jamie, is he dead? speak, Edwin."

"He is not dead; but they have removed him to another place. They think it better that he should live now in an asylum where such poor unfortunates are cared for, dear Helen."

"How dared they do it?" was the angry exclamation, forced, in bitter anguish, from lips which, till that day, had never uttered a word in wrath. "Is this *your* work, Edwin?"

"No! no! Helen, I have had nothing to do with it. I knew nothing of it," was the mild answer. "You wrong me by the thought; he was out, last night, and the doctor found him; and said that it was not safe he should be left free any longer."

"It is the first time he was ever out so! I've made him my care since he was a child! Edwin, I had the best and only right to take charge of him—no one on earth had such a right. How many years have I labored to save him from this fate. I *must* have him back again."

"Have they told you of our father, to-day?" asked Edwin, anxious, at any cost, to change the current of her thoughts.

"No," was the answer, and Helen looked, inquiringly, in her brother's face, for the solemn tone of his voice told her had he yet more to say.

"Dear Helen, he is dead."

"God's will be done," she calmly answered; and, shortly after, she added, "he must be brought home for burial, Edwin."

"Yes," was the choked utterance, and the boy turned from Helen; he could not tell her all.

Helen Wise never saw her Jamie again. It was from Julia's lips, in after days, that she learned the dreadful story of his unconquerable hate for the father who had senselessly and brutishly sought to govern him years before, and when she heard that, she dared not make one single plea that he might be given back to her fond keeping. Her work with him she now knew was over; oh, what a work it had been! but if the prayers which bore his dear name, and the thoughts which held him in faithful remembrance, if the tears she shed, if the love, which, till her death-day, she kept for him, might be spoken in my words, an affection, such as only the heart of a woman can bear, would be revealed; and you would wonder but to hear of it!

The afternoon on which her father's death was made known to Helen, a hearse, followed by two mourning carriages, was driven up to the avenue of Sunnyside, and Helen and Edwin Wise met their parent on his final return, in the great hall of the silent mansion. He came voiceless and sightless now—there was no uttered word of welcome—few tears—very little lamentation, and the grave closed over him and his sins. His children prayed to God, but not for strength to bear *his* loss. They needed not that, other griefs and fears pressed too heavily upon them to admit of lamentation over the clay that was now returned to its nobler dust. For Helen there was *yet* a future on earth—dark, cheerless, and dreadful. The thought of *it* was what made her droop so wearily when she stood by the grave of David Wise, listening to the burial service for the dead; and the remembrance of the injustice of the lifeless man; oh, was it not most mournful, was that which lingered longest after his funeral day!

XXVII.

JULY, August, and September passed, and Alfred Lord had not yet made his appearance at ———, to claim his promised

bride; but the idea of his probable coming had ceased to trouble Helen Wise.

As time passed on, and she gained power to survey her own position from every point of view, it seemed nothing to her if Sunnyside *did* fall to the appointed bridegroom. For Edwin, there was now no manner of reason to fear—for herself, no cause to hope. Jamie was gone beyond her care forever. The sweetest dream of woman had passed even as she dreamed it. Now the world, the wide world, was all alike to her. Since the child of her care was hers no longer, she was fully resolved to resign all claim to her old, beautiful home, the moment Alfred Lord appeared. Edwin would, very soon, with his fine abilities, be able to care for himself; and she, at the worst, among strangers, and in obscurity, there was no danger, could provide for her own few wants. So was her spirit calm.

On the first of October, another letter from Mr. Lord reached Helen; it was post-marked New York! The letter was opened without the least emotion, for her mind was so quiet now in its resolves, that all the powers of earth could not have shaken it. Therefore it was that she read with perfect calmness:

"I have heard so much, since my recent arrival in New York, from one whom *you* do not number among your personal friends, of the true heroism of your nature, that glad and proud as I should be to call you my wife, I have determined not to do so without I can win your full, unbiased consent. Will you permit me to visit you for the purpose of making an acquaintance, which, in any event, I shall be proud to have formed?

"ALFRED LORD."

To this letter, Helen thus immediately replied:

"I thank you for the courtesy with which you have written me; I would earnestly beg you to maintain your charitable and most honorable resolution. The property which my father left you, unconditionally, I am ready, at any moment, to resign in your favor; but, if you value your own self-respect, and my respect and life-long gratitude, acquaint me with your decision by letter, and do not come hither until I am gone.

"HELEN WISE."

There came an unlooked-for answer to this letter, in the shape of a legal document, transferring Sunnyside unreservedly to Helen and Edwin Wise, and this was the manly greeting that came with it:

“Heaven has blest my life of labor, and I cannot take from the orphan that to which God has given me no title. Your father was, as he has told me, vastly indebted to my father years ago; he cancelled that debt in his kindness and care when I was a penniless orphan. I remember him with gratitude, and I have far too much regard for his children to ever wilfully cause them an instant's pain. May He, from whom all blessings come, bless you, my friends.

“ALFRED LORD.”

“To Helen and Edwin Wise.”

That man did well in this—that is, he did his duty. But people, in his day, made too much of the act of justice, they magnified his generous deed, and, in the glory of it, forgot the simple *merit* of the case. Alas, for human nature!

XXVIII.

HELEN WISE lived long after the trial-times of her life were over. She lived to see the brown hair silvering on the temples of the lover of her youth—to see the children who bore his name growing up the honor and the beauty of his house. She lived to see her Edwin high in the ranks of his useful and honorable profession, while he sought no other hearth or companionship than that she had made so pleasant and so cheerful. And, oh, for *still* in those calm days, the grief, though chastened, was mingled sometimes with the quiet joy, she lived to receive another, the most precious of the dead, back to her heart again, to give her Jamie a funeral and a burial place. Long before she passed from earth he died—and, long before she sought the heavenly home, there was another death for which Helen wept, that of the Withered Fig Tree; the emblem of her blighted life, her blighted heart—the symbol of her spiritual

power, that could conquer deformity and weakness—that could spread beauty over desolation—that could, from its crushed bosom, send out loveliness of life, pure sympathy, and beautiful strength.

THE SEXTON OF THE OLD BRICK CHURCH.

It seemed to me the strangest thing in the world when some one suggested, "he is growing old." The idea of age, with its concomitants, such as come naturally upon a mortal, when many years have gone over him—age with lameness, deafness, blindness, would not associate with him, the careful, steadfast creature, whom we had *always called old*. It did not appear a natural suggestion, that his slow step, as he moved through galleries and aisles, across the chancel, and up the pulpit stairs, could ever be occasioned by anything but reverence; that the long lines and wrinkles in his face should stand in people's eyes the token of aught but a habitual, natural expression of solemn thought; that the heavy, downward sweeping of his eyelid, should tell of the weariness of nature, rather than the awe of one who was a doorkeeper in the house of God.

Yet when one said to me "our friend is growing old," I saw at once, and really for the first time, that the years which for him had gone on so quietly, had after all left their mark on him, and straightway I fell to wondering, if he had grown old as other people do, if as he mounts up day after day, and night after night, to the high belfry of the old Brick Church—if, as Sabbath after Sabbath he moves with ghost-like solemnity and noiselessness about the sanctuary, any more of weariness could be perceptible in his movements, or in himself in the performance of these lowly services, than there was twenty years ago?

Old man indeed! as a school-child he is associated with my very earliest recollections. I cannot call to mind the time when he was dissociated in thought, with the dread and the penalty of being "late." How often has he befriended us poor laggards! I make no extra tax on memory when I would recall the brown and wrinkled *visage*, as it used to look when it

would relax into a kind and gracious smile, as we came panting up the street (criminal lingerers over fairy books, and around play-houses,) and petitioned him, as only children can, to wait just one moment before he rung the bell, starting on as we asked it at a break-neck speed, and reaching the school-room gate (even *his* mercifulness could not in conscience delay an instant longer,) just as the "iron tongue" proclaimed that it was nine o'clock. Many a time I warrant might complaints lodged against luckless watchmakers in the thoughts of time keepers, have fallen with more justice on him, in whose heart was a more than woman-tenderness for the young children. For more than this did we count him in an especial manner worthy of our blessing. The welcome twelve o'clock! no awe or fear for teachers could stifle our glad hearts when he told us—for it always seemed as though the old man did work for us particularly—that the time to forget all we had learned *that* morning, was come!

We had no town clock in those days, and the children of now can hardly cherish such a lively thought as we, or be bound by such a tie as ours to the sexton of the old Brick Church. We had no railroad, with its whistling, ringing engines, then; no district schools with bells—and the sole public chronicler of time in our village, spoke from that fish-crowned belfry.

The sexton and the church seemed then, and until lately I may say, one and indivisible in thought. I cannot for the life of me so associate them now. Improvement may tear down, and build up, and renovate with brick and mortar, but it cannot lay its hands on the human—it could not at least in this instance, without desecrating it, without committing sacrilege! The old church, with its formal, high, square ceiling, its elevated pulpit, with the antiquated lamps, its choir, ornamented only with a great *BASE* base viol, and its chancel with a stove—ah! you should see it now with its granite paper hangings, its gracefully arched ceilings, its sky-light, and the splendid chandeliers, the pulpit with its luxurious sofa and velvet hangings, (no "blue"-light lingers round them!) the gilded Bible, the Brussels covered stairs, the glittering white paint, the glorious organ, (shade of Roger Williams!) and the rich and soft aisle-carpet-

ing! They have indeed beautified His temple; but I wonder if it seems home-like to the old man, who was an official in the church when it was young and poor? It may be that he is quite equal to the progress of

“The wondrous, wondrous age,”

but I wonder if, as he treads about those courts, he feels really, in the same sense as of old, part and parcel of the building? I wonder if, as he lights the gilded chandeliers and pulpit-lamps with their pendant glasses, which chime so musically in the touch of his rough hand, (they are scarcely equal to the dealing with such finery,) he does not look about and sigh for the old simple temple, wherein the tables of money-changers stood not! I wonder if, as he looks down from his seat upon the gaily robed audience, he does not sigh for those devout ones who used to gather there to worship Heaven, for those who used to pray for him before he was converted, who hailed him on that happy day as their Christian friend and brother. I wonder if, as his eyes move about and fix on us who were children but yesterday, (so it must seem to him,) taking the places of the vanished sires and fathers of the Church, he does not sigh heavily for the days that are gone!

I remember when a pillar (figuratively speaking) of the old Brick Church gave way—it fell—it could bear its part no longer. Never before was seen such gentleness in the old man’s bearing as he walked about the temple on that sad, sad day; never did grief speak more loudly even in sobbing voices or in tear-filled eyes, than that day, in the increased paleness and meekness of the old sexton, as he moved about so noiselessly. His hands trembled when he arranged the Bible and hymn-book in their places for the pastor’s use, and when he tolled that funeral bell there was a sob in every tone that he rung out from the iron—it was as the audible and mournful beating of his own heart, and we knew how every stroke as it rang through the bereaved and sorrowing village, echoed back heavily in his inmost soul. Full many a time has he tolled that loud-voiced, powerful bell, over those who, from long association, were dear as brother or as child to him; but never was his voice so faint with grief, his form so bowed with sorrow, as on that day when the loved one

of the church was carried out from the midst of the mourning congregation for burial.

There is somewhat of the real spirit of Christianity in the alternate ringing of village church bells on a Sabbath; when those who worship diversely are content to receive one common call, "come unto me." In the deferential waiting which I have observed in his manner, when standing by the old man in the belfry, as, his work for the moment done, he paused solemnly, till the sexton of another church had spoken to the people, I saw another working of his kind and noble heart. God bless him! if he loves his own church and his own people beyond all other, there is a worse form of bigotry on earth than that, and he is willing that all mankind should love their own, as he does his.

The dear old man! his hair grows grayer every day, and his poor, patched garments tell that he has labored, and grown not rich in the service. Not *rich*—but the Lord has blessed him. Fair young daughters who know how to labor and ease his daily tasks, and sons—may they prove worthy of their sire!—are growing up about him. He goes about in coarse and homely garments; the riches, the fashion, ay, and the pride of those he calls together to worship in the old Brick Church, have fallen not on him—and never till he dies, and another—may it be no careless and unskilful hand!—shall knell his departure will he be clothed in beautiful apparel, and his brown face lose its furrowed proof of care!

I have often wondered when he stands up there alone in the high belfry in the lonely nights, whether he ever thinks of the time when he, who has so often roused the slumbering, shall himself sleep, and another hand rest on the knotted rope, and tell the people of the flight of time. And when I have thus wondered, the thought has come to me that from no elevation in this life, not from throne or pulpit could a soul ascend more readily or freely to its true home, than his, who "up aloft" there, has in patience and humility proclaimed Time's thrilling messages—who from his wind-shaken tower, has told, not of the flight of time alone, but much from his own brave heart's history.

THE BLACK FROST.

"Methinks

This word of love is fit for all the world,
And that for gentle hearts another name
Would speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns."

It was a clear, calm night. Brightly shone the innumerable stars: the fixed orbs of giant magnitude, the little twinkling points of light, the glorious constellations—in their imperial beauty stood they, gazing upon the mysterious face of darkness—a clear, calm, terribly cold night.

Winter had not as yet fairly set in. There had been no snow, but it was very late in the autumn, and the grass, and the flowering shrubs and trees, looked as though they had each and all felt the cruel breath of the Destroyer, as he pronounced the doom upon them.

People rubbed their hands, and talked with quivering lips of the hard winter coming, as they hastened, in the increasing shadows of the night, to their homes. The children, warmed and gladdened by the bright fires that were kindled on the hearth-stones, romped and frolicked, and prophesied, with knowing looks, about snow-balling, sleigh-rides, skating, and all manner of fun. The young girls met together, and talked merrily of coming gaieties; the old man wondered whether he should see another spring-time; and the poor crept to their beds at nightfall, glad to forget everything—cold, hunger, and misery—in sleep.

Midnight came. More and more brightly shone the stars—they glowed, they trembled, and smiled on one another. The cold became intense—in the deep silence how strangely looked

the branches of the leafless trees! how desolate the gardens and the forest—how *very still* the night did seem!

Close beside an humble cottage, under a huge bush of flowering-currant, had flourished all the autumn a tiny violet-root. And still, during the increasing cold of the latter days, the leaves had continued green and vigorous, and the flowers opened.

There had been an arrival at the cottage that day. Late in the afternoon, a father and mother, with their child, had returned from long wandering in foreign lands.

A student had watched their coming. In the morning, he had gathered a flower from that little root in their garden, and now, as he sat in the long hours of night, poring over his books, he kept the violet still beside him, in a vase which held the treasures of a green-house, and his eyes rested often on the pale blue modest flower.

At nightfall, a youthful form had stood for a moment at the cottage-door, and the young invalid's eyes, which so eagerly sought all familiar things, at last rested on those still living flowers—flowers, where she had thought to find all dead, even as were those buds which once gave fair promise of glorious opening in her girl-heart! Unmindful of the cold and dampness, she stepped from the house, and passed to the violet-root, and, gathering all the flowers but one, she placed them in her hair, and then hastened with a shiver back to the cottage.

In the fast-increasing cold, the leaves that were left bowed down close to the earth, and the delicate flowers crowning the pale, slender stem, trembled under the influence of the frost.

The little chamber where Mary laid down to rest, was that which, from her childhood, had been set apart for her occupation; a pleasant room, endeared to her by a thousand joyful dreams dreamed within its shade—solemnized to her, also, by that terrible waking to sorrow which she had known.

She reclined now on her bed in the silentness, the darkness; but she rested not, she slept not. The young girl's eyes, fixed on the far-off stars, on the glorious heavens, her thoughts wandered wild and free, but her body was circled by the arm of Death.

She had not yet slept at all that night ; she had not slept for many nights. Winter was reigning in Mary's heart—it had long reigned there. She was remembering now, while others nestled in the arms of forgetfulness, those days that were gone, when she had looked with such trust and joy upon the years to be—how that she had longed for the slowly-unfolding future to develop itself fully, completely ! how she had wholly given herself to the fancies and the hopes of the untried. Alas ! she had reached, she had passed, too soon, that crisis of life which unfolds next to the expectant the season of winter—she had seen the gay flowers fading, the leaves withering, the glory of summer pass. And yet how young, how very young she was !

They who saw the shadow brooding over her, out of which she could not move, they who loved, who almost worshipped her, the father and the mother, had in every manner sought, how vainly ! to stop the course of that disease which fastened upon her—they could not dispel the sorrow which had blighted her life. She, also, for a moment, desperately as they, had striven with her grief, but, now, in the cheerless autumn time, she was come back to her home, feeling that it would be easier there to die.

Gazing from her couch out upon the “steadfast skies”—thinking on the past, and the to-come—the to-come of the dying ! Yet the thought of death and judgment terrified her not. Surely she would find mercy and heart's ease in the Heaven over which the merciful is king !

But suddenly, in the night's stillness, in the coldness and the darkness, she arose ; and steadfastly gazed, for an instant, upward, far upward, where a star shot from the zenith, down, down, to the very horizon. She fell back at the sight, her spirit sped away with that swift glory flash—*Mary was dead !*

In that moment, the student, also, stood beside his window. The fire in the grate had died away, the lamp was nearly exhausted ; wearied with his long-continued work, he had risen, and now, for an instant, stood looking upon the heavens. There was sadness and weariness in his heart. The little violet, and the travellers' return, had strangely affected him : for once he found not in his books the satisfaction which he sought : he felt

that another life than that of a plodding book-worm, might be led by him. His dreams, in the morning hour, were not pleasant as he slept. They were solely of one whose love he had set at naught for the smiles of a sterner love ; of one whom he now thought of, as in the spring time of his life, when she was all the world to him. And now that she was come again, and he should see her once more ! ah, he would bow before her as he once had, and she, who was ever so gentle, so loving, so good, would not spurn him : she would forget his forgetfulness, she would yet give to him that peace, that joy which he had never quaffed at the fountains of learning !

Up rose the sun, and people saw how the Black Frost was over the earth, binding all things in its hard, close, cold embrace. Later in the morning, a little child, passing by the cottage, paused and peeped through the bars upon the violet-root. Yesternight, when she went home from school, she saw the flowers blooming there, the pale, blue, faint-hearted looking flowers—and now she remembered to look if they were there still. But though she looked long and steadfastly where the sunlight fell beneath the currant-bush, she could not see that she sought for ; so passing quietly through the gate, she stooped down where the violets had been, and felt the leaves, and knew that they were frozen ; and it was only by an effort that she kept back the fast-gathering tears, when she looked on the one flower Mary had left, and saw how it was drooped and dead.

But a sadder sight, and one more full of meaning, was presented in the pleasant chamber, whose window opened on the yard where the blossoming bushes grew. For there a woman bent over the bed whereon another frost-killed flower lay moaning in the bitterness of grief, the death of her one treasure !

Still later in the day, another mourner stood in that silent place, thinking of the meteor and the violet. It was the student, he who in remorse and anguish came, bemoaning the frost-blighted. Too late, too late, he came to tell his love—too late to crave forgiveness, too late to soothe the broken-hearted ! Now stood he himself in the valley of the shadow of wo.

And the snow and the storms abounded. Winter was come !

THE HAUNTED.

THE career of the prodigal received a sudden check ; his purpose was thwarted by a startling and peremptory call to his father's house, for old Gaspar Rewardin was about to die.

Many years had gone by since summons or message of any kind had sought out the youth in the midst of his miserable ways ; it was long since a voice from within or without had spoken in warning ; long since a friendly hand had been outstretched to prevent or to guide him. In his early youth, Lloyd Rewardin, more in the spirit of defiant pride than from real love of sin, had, in his doings, declared "evil to be good, and good evil," and the assertion once made, there was for him no probable returning—to all entreaty, to all remonstrance, to all warning, his reply was manifestly, not in words, but in deeds, "Nay, but I have chosen other gods, and after them will I go."

His repeated transgressions and sins fell with the keenest force on the disappointed father's heart—fell, alas ! so often, in such quick, undeceiving succession, that the parent, long before his intercourse with Lloyd had come to an end, ceased, in his utter despair, to look for any good thing to come from the life of that only, that erring, that *still beloved* child.

Old Gaspar had sadly failed in his duty respecting the boy. Because it had been a hard task, one of the very hardest, to train a headstrong, passionate, selfish child in the paths of patience, love, and reverence, he abandoned the work—he was not indeed equal to the task, and the quick-witted son was not long in discovering and taking advantage of that. So, from early childhood, till he had put away all childish things but his

evil heart, his violent temper, and his irreverence, Lloyd went on from bad to worse, making most shocking havoc of all his capabilities—wronging his moral nature, and endangering his physical life.

When the summons came to him that led him back to his father's house, he had trodden apparently to the last extremity of sin—he stood at the last possible point, from which a return could be made. The tidings of his father's illness, and desire to look upon his son once more before he died, came to him late in the night; a night which had been given to vile revelry, to drunken sports, and it was with fear and trembling that the son heard the call, with fear and trembling that he obeyed it. It was a thought awful, even to him, that his father had been waiting and longing for his coming, while he had been stifling and drowning the thought of death, in the cup of folly.

With a completely sobered, but most troubled mind, Lloyd Rewardin set out on that return. He dreaded to face sorrow, such as he knew he should find in his old home; he was terrified at the idea of the final meeting, and the final parting with the dying; and how could he look on the face of his mother; she whom he had defied, insulted and wronged so unpardonably, a thousand times? He could not call to his aid one strengthening or supporting thought, he was nerveless, and wholly forsaken by all spirits, good and bad; he was going *alone* to his father's house, to hold last council with the dying! He would have neglected the call—disobeyed it, had he dared; but he did not dare; he had now no power but to go on, to receive, he knew not what; perhaps, and reason told him it would be a gift most meet, the curse of his father, and the curse of God.

He persevered in his journey till he entered the town which was his birth-place; till he had passed even the portals of that house, from which he had gone forth, only not driven, by those on whom he had delighted to bring shame and sorrow. A change, strange and sudden as Sâul of Tarsus experienced, had come over the prodigal in the progress of his homeward journey, but it was not so significant, not so decisive as that which made a Paul the Apostle, out of the great persecutor; for though the prodigal went with softened heart, and full of

regret, seeking his father; he was not *repentant* to that degree which was needful in one who had so sinned, in order that full forgiveness might be his.

It was true to the letter—old Gaspar Rewardin *was dying*. Not five minutes after his son entered the sick room, the father breathed his last. The dead man and Lloyd were together, in those last seconds, quite alone; for the young man did not find his mother there, where he had thought to find her, watching and weeping over her husband. She had died, months before that day.

Yearning with the deepest paternal affection over his erring child, Gaspar had in his will forgiven the dark, unholy past of the poor youth, and had left a more than ample proof of his forgiveness and confidence in the power of Lloyd to do good, in making him heir to nearly all his estate. He left also, in words that could have come from no other than a heart broken with disappointment, and in entreaties that spoke of a hope that still remained to the last, what, if he would only allow it, might prove a richer bequest than all those lands and all that gold, to Lloyd Rewardin.

The old man's mind wandered in his last hours—he did not recognise his son, when the young man stood by his bed. But the conscious, the *living* one, did not understand that. He had conjured up a harrowing scene of salutation and farewell; and it did not enter his head, that his father was dying without knowing who stood there in such terror—such actual grief, waiting for a pardon and a blessing. When he caught the startled, wild look Gaspar turned on him, he thought it was a reproach for delay in coming; and when the old man said, "When I come again, I will tell you: I *shall* come, Lloyd," the youth fell weeping upon his knees, and, clasping the cold hands of the *dead*, cried in an agony, which alas! was not atonement, "Father, father, speak! Do you know me?—me, Lloyd! Father! forgive!" The words which were shrieked so wildly found no answer: those fixed eyes could not see; those hands could not lift in blessing—the spirit of Gaspar was not there to say, pardon! ~~Death only was there~~, and a greater than Death—God! And it was ~~with that~~ Greater, and not the

body of the suffering and the wronged, that the returned prodigal had now to do.

Lloyd Rewardin was the sole mourner at the funeral—he alone was clad in funereal garments, when his father was laid in the vault, which was already consecrated to the dead by the body of the wife who had preceded him. That he stood an earnest and sincere mourner by the grave, none could doubt—not even the harshest and most indignant of those judges, who knew that the father and mother had gone each, gladly, from a world where their only child had made their name such a disgraceful notoriety.

The name of Lloyd Rewardin was taken on many a lip, that day; but it was spoken with a sigh, and often with a curse; and children were warned, and parents thought with trembling, when that name was syllabled.

It became, after those first days of his return, a wonder with many, as to how long the solemn impressions made by death would remain with binding force on the mind of the prodigal: few expressed faith in even the reality of his grief—few would have trusted him, had he pledged his word to lead henceforth a reputable life—few gave him credence when, Sabbath after Sabbath, he went, with thoughtful look and sad, to the house of God; and they who did give him credence were *only women*. Men, for the most part, had small faith in the outward show of good, in one whose ways had been evil continually. The humility and evident self-distrust, with which he endeavored to make acquaintance among his father's old friends, would not assure them—the forbearance with which he heard, more than once, the personal, taunting expressions of children, which told him plainly what they had heard at home, could not convince. Cases too frequent were in the minds of those unbelievers of the transitory nature of sudden conversions. Excitement, they said, had produced a reaction—then, that shame took the place of excitement, when that had died away; and, when he ceased to be *ashamed* of his past, what would happen then?

It might have been excitement—it might have been chance, that tended, *in a degree*, to produce the good result which really

was produced, by the death of the father, in the mind and life of the son ; but excitement and shame were not all.

That might have continued influencing him, till the effects following his sudden abandonment of a dissolute life were over and done away ; but what was it that made him persevere in soberness, in morality, in Sabbath-keeping, in industry, in *quiet*, during the months that followed ? What was it that induced him to go on restoring the old place, which had, in a few years, become a "Castle Rackrent," to its original beauty ? Wherefore did he remain there, lonely and solitary, when, every day, every hour, all about him must have recalled scenes, events, words, things, which, if he had any feeling or any consciousness, must have been remembered with agony ?

Among women, I said, a gentler judgment was passed on the wanderer. Even among those who were aware of the *whole* of his career, there was charity for him ; and they had kind words and kinder hopes for him, when men passed hard sentence on his past, and even on his present. They rejoiced in the seeming repentance, if it was, indeed, no more ; for they thought, perhaps the paths of peace may lure him yet—he may be *led*, if he will not of his own will *go*, in the ways of duty. *They* gave all credence when his knees were bowed in prayer—they felt, who had seen tears falling from his eyes, that all *must* be well with him, if he could weep. Especially in one young heart, were such kind thoughts, and such good hopes, entertained for him. Yes, and in *one old* heart, too ! May old Judge Paul and little Elsie have a rich reward, one day, for their staunch faith in the intrinsic ability for good in human nature !

Judge Paul and Gaspar Rewardin had been acquaintance, neighbors, friends, for the last thirty years ; and his father's best-beloved and most honored companion, had been associated with many recollections of the earliest years of Lloyd's life. It was for this reason that the young man at first shrunk, with nervous dread and apprehension, from making any advances towards resuming acquaintance with a man of such high probity, and almost stern morality, as Judge Paul was known to be : it was for this reason, too, that, as time passed on, the young man and the old became the best of friends. This happy state of

affairs, for Rewardin, was brought about by an accident: it was maintained with more than common vigilance by both parties.

Elsie Paul was the youngest of a large family of sons and daughters, which had grown up in excellence and beauty, under the fostering care and constant guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Judge. She was a pretty child, and intelligent—petted, but not quite spoiled; yet a lighter rein had certainly been held over her than over any of the rest of the little mortals who had been trained at that fireside. Lovely and dear she was to all who had to do with her; and it was her parents' constant prayer that she might live to be a blessing to herself and to others in the world. It was a noble prayer, and, every day that it was offered, it seemed as though an answer, in token of the existence of a prayer-hearing God, were given—her life was so bright, and she was such a joy to all. But none who made that prayer had dared to hope for such a full, such a glorious answer, as was given at last; for, through the darling little Elsie, a soul was brought out from the torments!

That, notwithstanding all his confessions, something was yet kept back, which weighed heavily on his mind, Judge Paul had no manner of doubt, when he saw Lloyd Rewardin resolutely persevering in performance of every duty, without finding peace. That he *did not* find peace, was evident enough in the very expression of the young man's face—in the nervous zeal with which he kept himself constantly occupied in conversation with others, or in planning work for those in his employ, or in busying himself with active labor. He was doing all he could, the Judge well knew, to preserve himself from some thought, some recollection, that was not merely *grievous*. As months went on, the discerning eyes of the old man saw that the trouble, whatever it was, did not remove itself, with the strenuous exertions Lloyd was continually making to live up to the full stature of manhood: he was struggling with some conviction all the while, which would press itself upon his mind—he was laboring under some delusion—or else was fighting still against God, through ignorance or willfully—in either case, to his misery. Certainly to his own misery, or he could not have grown so pale and haggard, so care-worn and desponding: certainly to his own

misery, for steadfast pursuance of duties is known, universally, to be productive of something besides nervous melancholy and habitual unrest.

One night, Judge Paul and Lloyd Rewardin were conversing in the study, where the old man often pursued his professional avocations. Little Elsie was with them; for, when her father was at home, his room was her chosen play-house. She had been remarkably quiet while the two men were conversing—had remained there, indeed, a whole hour without speaking; and yet she was not asleep.

Early in the evening the judge was called from the room; he had no sooner closed the door after him, than the child arose, and, carrying her little chair with her, went and sat down close beside the guest, and then she said, "You've been talking about that funny dream-book; don't you think, Mr. Rewardin, *I* saw a ghost once!"

"Possible!" was the answer, spoken as earnestly as Elsie could wish of a true believer. "Do tell me how it looked, and what it said to you."

"Oh, it didn't *say* anything—but what a look it had! it was just as white as snow—and it moved about just as if it had wings. Wouldn't it be funny, Mr. Rewardin, if *we* could move about so easy, just like spirits? oh, I wish we *could*!"

"Well, but what did you tell the ghost?" was asked with an interest far from assumed.

"I saw it after I was in bed—it was just as dark! in the room—and I was all alone; I shut up my eyes when I saw it, but it would keep moving about, and I couldn't help thinking, what if *we don't see with our eyes* after all?"

"Did the ghost frighten you?"

"No—it didn't frighten me—but it made me feel queer; I held my breath, and then I thought I should have choked—only bad people see ghosts, nurse says; but I *should* like to see that ghost again—I'd speak to it. Do you believe in houses being haunted, and in *people* being haunted, Mr. Rewardin?"

"Tell *me* first, do you?"

"Yes."

"So do I."

"Oh, isn't that nice!—then if we both believe in it, *we can* be haunted—but I should never sleep a wink in such a house, it would be such sport to watch the ghosts."

"Why, Elsie, I never heard of a child before that *wasn't* afraid of ghosts—you talk of them as if they were playthings. Pray what would you do if you were haunted?"

"If the *thing* troubled me, I'd get rid of it."

"How."

"Oh—I don't know, but I *would* get rid of it—I'd say my prayers! and if it was a bad spirit that haunted me, it would go off; if it was good, it could not hurt, when I prayed."

"But Elsie, what if it tormented you, though you prayed all the time?"

"Then *I* would look around me, and see if something were not to be *driven* away—if something were not to be *done*, in order that *I* might drive the evil away!" exclaimed the earnest voice of the Judge, who had listened with all his heart to the eager questioning, the ardent zeal, with which his young friend was seeking to learn of the child.

Lloyd stood up when he heard that answer, but his eyes did not shrink before the searching glance of the Judge; he went close up to him and said, in a low voice, "*I* have been a Haunted Man since I stood by that death-bed, Judge Paul. My father's spirit has been constantly with me, and about me, but it has been no kind, forgiving companion! It has tormented me—it has repeated my father's dying words in my hearing, till the only wonder is, I am not a madman. I have fought that spirit—I will struggle with it in another way now. I am going at last to make reparation. Will you countenance me in seeking a bridal to which a sense of right, but no impulse of love, leads me? Will you give me your support, in approving a course which can bring peace, and peace alone, to two miserable mortals?"

"Yes—if duty leads you *that* way, go; and do not for a moment delay."

If repentance such as is productive of faith, and hope, and charity, in their noble significations, has aught to do with mak-

ing the happiness of mortals, then the future of an erring man and woman, who have taken the place of old Gaspar Rewardin and his wife in the world, will not be wholly miserable;—if mutual forbearance, self-control, and a hearty desire to find virtues, where each found passions once, have aught to do with the real *life* of love, then that erring man and woman, inasmuch as they have pitied, will ere long love, even as “the angels apprehend.” But if they be *not* happy, if they be not loving here, they will at least hereafter be found worthy of *both* happiness and love.

They may have found their cross of suffering in one another, but Lloyd at least is a haunted man no longer, and the wife who bears his name, is *now* certainly, nothing less than an honor to that name, and to the name of woman!

GROUND BIRDS AND EAGLES.

(INSCRIBED TO OUR YOUNGEST.)

"God be with thee, my beloved! *God* be with thee!
Else alone thou goest forth
Thy face unto the North,
Moor and pleasance, all around thee and beneath thee
Looking equal in one snow!"—MISS BARRETT.

How pleasant is the field that stretches over a hill-side, (in a village not a thousand miles either to the west or east of this,) where the blue and fragrant wild flowers blossomed once! Blossomed once! oh, desecrating hand of utility! the field is ploughed up now, and where the merry little children wandered, gathering favors at the generous hand of spring, in harvest-time the reapers may be seen, gathering in the heavy sheaves of "bearded grain."

My dearest, how few of the haunts our childhood loved are there that have not undergone changes most woful to look upon! The time-honored Arsenal hill—it looks less of a mountain than it did of yore—the pleasant grove, the healthful spring of fragrant sulphur—to all intents they are *gone*. True, the hill remains, in reality, in all its legitimate proportions—but the grove of forest trees is thinned by the hand of man—the pole-swing has disappeared—and the spring! that too is broken—dried up. The old thorn-tree, near by, so often subject to my visitations in the autumn-time, when I was accompanied always by one, my dearest friend in childhood, that too is dead, and she, alas! has also departed from the earth! The sod which, for centuries had remained unbroken, even that has disappeared,

and—and—they have planted potatoes there! Would it not be surprising if the disease failed to manifest itself in the fruits perfected in a soil, which *should* have remained consecrate for ever to the sports of little children?

Alack, my friend, and the brook! It would be shameful neglect in me could I forget to make one moan over its decrepit old age. You remember how through the loveliest of valleys, of yore, it took its winding way—how every returning spring beheld it in full and mad career, intent on fertilizing all the neighboring fields with its superabundant waters. *Now*, during the greater part of the year, it concentrates its languid force in two or three poor, forlorn, stagnant pools, in which neither the eye of man or beast can take delight!

But, hold! my vagabond thoughts are strangely wandering from the *field* of contemplation I had chosen to occupy myself with to-day. Let us believe, you and I, (aged and worn-out veterans in the world's service, as we are, you know,) that we are young again! We will fancy that we are children once more, and so stand as playmates with these little ones now on the green bank which overlooks so complacently the lovely lake and the graceful hills beyond. We will gather, ah, were it not only in imagination! the star-shaped blue flowers, and the geranium red; we will come up close behind the group of young creatures gazing so intently into the depths of yonder bush, and harken! what is it they are discussing so earnestly?

"Hush, Allan, don't talk so loud; you'll frighten the little birds!"

"Poh! they're only ground birds: what's the use of you girls making such a fuss? if they were eagles ——"

And the boy who was holding the bush open for the accommodation of the curious little gazers, let the branches go—they fell together again, and he turned away again in half scorn of his companions, one of whom knelt down in awed and breathless delight, watching silently the birdlings who lay so helpless in their infancy there, in the beautiful shade.

One by one the little folks, who had gratified their idle curiosity, (which, when the nest was first discovered, raged to an alarming extent,) turned away, ~~resuming their search of wild~~

flowers, until, at last, Amy Nelson was left quite alone. Soon the parent bird came back ; she had been gathering food for her young ones, and the little girl moved cautiously away, but not beyond seeing distance, and then sat down to watch the movements of the feathered family.

And, as she waited there and watched, other thoughts, which sprung up from observance of the mutual affection of the mother and her brood, came into Amy's mind ; they spread a sadness over her young face, and filled her eyes with tears—for she was an orphan girl—a child gifted with no promising beauty or brilliant talents, such as would make her protectors proud of her, and her heart wanted confidence to expand and to clasp in a warm embrace those whose kindness chilled—whose counsel warped the unfoldings of her spirit.

"Here Amy, I've brought you some flowers, with the rain drops of last night still on them, to pay for disturbing the birds," said Allan Ross, suddenly interrupting her sad meditation, as he approached with deliberate measured step, which betokened the pride and conceit of the boy, and flung himself upon the grass beside her.

"But what made you say 'if they were only eagles,' Allan ? Did you ever see an eagle ? they are great, strong birds, that don't want us to love them. The ground birds are a great deal prettier, I should think."

"I never saw an eagle," answered the lad, "only in pictures. I know they can fly up higher than any bird, and they can look right in the face of the sun, too."

"But then they don't seem so near the people. You can't see them so well, and they don't sing as sweetly as these birds. They have great big wings, and they scream and shriek, so I've read."

"Well, well, you may love the ground birds, Amy, it's your nature to, I suppose ; but I think you don't see how much *greater* eagles are—you can't reason of things."

"Don't speak so, Allan. It sounds as though you were proud, and think you know everything. Greatest isn't always best, I'm sure ; and you can't say eagles are any better than these sweet little creatures."

"Why isn't greatest best? If a man is a great man, and people say he is, I should think that was better than for him to be an old drudge like Enos Brooks. You wouldn't call *him* very great, would you, though he's *good* enough?"

"It depends ——"

"No, it don't depend on anything. I know very well what you'll say, just what father has a hundred times, that it's better to be what people call a good man than to be a great man."

"But a good man *is* a great man, Allan, and great men ar'n't always good, you know that well enough."

The boy laughed in reply, and held up his head, saying Amy would know more about such things some day, and so the young philosophers set out on their return home.

Allan Ross was the son of a man whose worldly goods were by no means superlatively abundant—the fortune which the future held in store for the boy must be won by his own exertions, and a brilliant one he was already determined it should be.

The children who were his companions on this afternoon, of his introduction to the reader, were all poor—the scholars of a free school; they had come out to enjoy a holiday in the woods and fields, and Allan had come with them, because he was at a loss to know what to do with himself during the long, dreamy hours of the day—and secondly, he knew that Amy Nelson would be there, and for some reason a sort of magnet seemed to have attached itself to her footsteps which had the power to draw him on.

For certainly there was nothing in the mere gathering of flowers that could satisfy him—neither was there elsewhere any thing that seemed capacitated to satisfy him. "If they were eagles," were words expressive of a longing which had a deeper source than any who heard them, suspected; they jarred unpleasantly on the mind of Amy Nelson, but she was not yet learned in the lore of character, and could not therefore tell why Allan never seemed to take pleasure in anything that was merely beautiful, simple and pure.

But that exclamation was the burden of his cry from childhood. "If I were rich—if I were great—if I could only be ~~han~~—"

ored in the world!" It was this foolish ambitious aspiring which made his youth anxious and unhappy—his after years slavish; which made him despise "the day of small things;" which induced him to look with envy on all whom fortune had placed in better or more easy circumstances than himself.

It was this spirit which, in later years, tempted him to rebel against the counsel of his wise father, who, perceiving what was in the son, and cherishing a strong desire for his happiness, strove to turn the bent of his aspiration, endeavoring to place in more alluring light the life of calm enjoyment and healthful labor, which in *his* sight was far preferable to a more conspicuous, but (as too often it proves) more miserable and troublous station in the world.

"It is not to any little, or humble, or inferior position of greatness to which I aspire," was the invariable reply. "I scorn the mediocre eminence which the great mass may with a little effort reach. And father, did I not feel quite assured that all I hope for I shall accomplish, I would at once obey you—or—make way with myself."

And an energetic earnestness of voice and look always accompanied such answer, which convinced the father that it was vain to argue with a will so headstrong and obstinate. Proud he was, we will not deny, of the great personal beauty and manly figure of his son—proud he was of the boy's talents also, but the old man was one of that small class of people who, holding that the lives of those who are bent upon attaining and holding power, lose in happiness, and contentment, and peace, what they gain in a so-called greatness, are content to remain unknown on the great stage of the world's action—to exert personal influence in the limited sphere they are born in—one of those few intrinsically *wise* men, who, looking on the show of society as merely a vain show, find their life-happiness in fulfilling the duties devolving on them with unshrinking fidelity—honest, forgiving, benevolent toward humanity, and faithfully obedient and loving toward God.

To such a man, the station, for which the son evidently longed, the power, to attain which, his thoughts, even in boyhood aimed, was a sorrowful end of foolish ambition. To him

the show of paint, and the glitter of tinsel, seemed unworthy objects for which to strive; and rather than Allan should in *such* an arena be esteemed a great man, he had much preferred that a private life should bear witness to his being irreproachably good and honest.

But the youth had a will, which, as he approached manhood, would not endure to be shackled. Scorning all *rule* himself, he aspired to rule others—scoffing at all attempts which others, wiser and older than himself, made to guide him, he would, had it been possible, have taken into his own hands the government of the universe!

And it was thus confident of success, but little skilled in the so difficult science of self-government, that Allan Ross went into the world. His school education was in a most unfinished state, but his intellect was brilliant, and if he never exhibited patience in listening to the teachings of moral suasion, he had proved himself to be a patient student of human nature, for the not-easily deciphered pages of the minds of men had been attentively conned by him; therefore he went into the world with a stock of *such* knowledge, unusual in one so young.

Little Amy Nelson was, as has before been stated, an orphan girl. Very early in life she had been entrusted by a dying mother to the care of a distant relative, who had signified his desire to receive the helpless child into his own family. It so happened that this relative was a "well-to-do-in-the-world" sort of man, and his wife had a mind and heart which were evidently cast in the same mould with his own. But though they were regarded by their poorer neighbors as prosperous people, they were remarkably poor in spirit. Having on both sides, previous and subsequent to their marriage, devoted themselves to the accumulation of riches, they had finally, late in life, emerged from their labors, shorn of all wealth of intellect or heart, essentially vulgar people, destitute of much principle, filled with the low ambition to shine brighter stars than their neighbors in the social firmament.

In her earliest years, Amy diligently shared in the labors of her friends, and was brought up in the belief that there was a superhuman value in gold and silver. But though educated in

this school, it does not follow that Amy became a convert to such absurd doctrines, though the escape from imbibing them might seem really little less than miraculous.

An affectionate, generous-hearted girl she grew, cherishing a love for all the grand and beautiful in nature, and reverencing with a depth of religious earnestness, her protectors had not been able to comprehend, the Creator of all the earth.

When she first sought her new home, Amy was a sincere and confiding child, and though the education she had received tended to make her a reserved and seemingly passionate woman, it had never succeeded in quite chilling the pure and ardent love her soul cherished for all things pure and beautiful. The ground-birds and the humblest field-flowers, spoke to her a language that her soul had no difficulty in comprehending; and they were treasured friends, ever welcomed with smiles of rejoicing, whose departure and absence were mourned over with a sorrow which was yet fraught with hope.

With all her affection for simple, truthful things, was it not strange that when years had transformed Amy Nelson into a beautiful woman, she should cherish for a youth of so complex a nature as Allan Ross, a love deep and strong as life itself! Through all their childhood they were friends, and the strong minds of each in maturer years were sensible of a mutual attraction. The one was all eagerness to teach—to arouse—to inspire with ambitious desire; the other cherished an abiding hope to purify, and to truly exalt. They were friends the sincerest, ay, more than that; but Amy had sorrowed many a time over the fiery impetuosity of the wrongly ambitious youth; and he had laughed, and too often in no *pretence* of scorn, at the pleadings and the simplicity of the gentle-hearted girl.

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Allan Ross was called one of the most popular young men of his county—a “rising man,” one destined to make a figure among his compeers.

But Amy Nelson was almost entirely unknown beyond the limits of her native village—known little there among the many, save as a very upright, proper, candid, and over-scrupulous girl,

whose presence was most frequently considered a check on the sprits of revellers and the tongues of busy-bodies. But there was never a heart capable of stronger and more enduring affection than was hers; and it was with a love surpassing the love of ordinary woman, that she regarded Allan. Not because he was esteemed by men a genius, did she treasure a thought of him in her heart of hearts—not because he had written a book which aroused the attention, the amazement, and the admiration of aged statesmen—not because he was sacrificing time, health, talents, and hope, to striving with his fellows for honor in the political arena! For none of these. *She* saw deeper into his soul than even he had ever penetrated. Saw how he was wronging, and had wronged, every day of his life, the spirit within him that was nobler than ambition—the spirit, which, from its height in the realms of purity, looked with scorn on the poor reward, popular applause—the mighty, but chained spirit, human love.

It had been a joy unutterable to her—might she have loosened the bonds of the captive—might she have helped dethrone the power which had mastered heart and intellect. She saw what was by himself unheeded, that at every end attained, every point reached, there was dissatisfaction felt, and a longing for nobler achievement. She saw to the end of life it would continue so to be, if it were not in the *power* as well as the will of some hand to restrain him from striving for greatness in the world. Not because she saw in such striving anything degrading and sinful in itself; but Amy felt that for one constituted as was Allan Ross, it were infinitely better that he should never learn or attempt learning the game of politics.

As well as he knew how to love anything, beside his grand idea of personal elevation and advancement, Allan loved Amy Nelson. And, as time passed on, this preferment increased, and the young man did not want the resolution to reveal this state of things to her—and I should make a very willful misstatement if I said that Amy heard his declaration unmoved. Nay, reader, it was not so. For even when he whispered to her his proud prophetic visions of the future, she was a woman, and, for a moment, dazzled by the brilliant prospect unfolding before

him, she gave herself up to the delight of indulging with him in his dreams; when he vowed to her his life-long love, she was a loving woman, and would fain believe that love was, indeed, the passion paramount in his breast.

But a day came when the glittering pageant of thought, and fancy, and hope, stood out in the broad sunlight, and she saw it all in its true proportions. Saw it with sorrow, and with eyes that were blinded with tears. Reason and conscience, and a sense of duty toward herself and toward him, aroused her, and half-confident, half-fearful of the effect of her own power, she resolved to plead with Allan that he would turn from the bewildering, distracting path he had entered.

Such hour of pleading was delayed. Filled with sorrowful foreboding, whenever the subject crossed her mind, she resolved again and again and again on speaking, until events, at last, transpired, which nerved her to her purpose, for they showed that if it were possible for her ever to speak effectually, that time was the present. And prayerfully the young girl prepared for a struggle, in which she knew his defeat would ensure his peace on earth, while it would remove, effectually, what was rearing itself in her mind, a strong barrier against their union.

Flushed with a victory, to obtain which Amy felt, from all her past acquaintance with her lover, means which had in another case won his unqualified disapproval, had been used, Allan appeared, one night, before her, and when Amy heard him then boldly upholding a principle, which she knew to be morally wrong, she could no longer maintain silence.

"You take a strangely confined view of the case, Allan," she said, mildly, "and with a professed statesman, or rather with one who is educating himself for such a position, should that be allowed? You have opposed a measure, I am convinced, from all I know of you, solely because it has become a party question, which, I am very sure, were you to decide upon at another time, independent of party, you would uphold with all your might. Tell me, my friend, truly, have you regarded this question solely, or at all, in a moral light?"

"Your queries are quite too refined, too absurd, Amy! Is a

man to be a political weathercock? You, of all others, are wont to be an upholder of consistency."

"And it is *consistency* which I uphold now. You are a moral man, Allan, and as *such* I want you to say why you have aided in the defeat of a measure which every christian, every freeman, should advocate. You make too much of politics, dear friend. You elevate them above their true position. You make what is only a means, an end-triumph. Is it not that which you and all your party men seek chiefly for? Are you not bending your time and your energies, for the most part, to the attainment of trivial things? Is there happiness ever to be found in such constant excitement as your days and nights are sacrificed to? I fear you are deceiving yourself—that you will find you have, when you reach the goal you seek!"

"Nay, it is you who talk foolishly, who are deceived! What science is there nobler than that of national government? One cannot be expected to give up more than his whole time and himself for the good of the people, and a man should certainly not be called selfish, who is willing to so devote himself."

"If it is *really for their good*, my friend, that he so devotes himself. If there be not behind that apparent cause, another far-reaching, undreamed of by the world, and perhaps scarcely defined to his own mind, a motive that is selfish in its nature, and in its every aspiration. In that case he *is* devoting himself—but whether for their interest or not, is quite another thing."

"You reason like a woman, Amy. Are there to be no statesmen? Is there to be no machinery of government? Trust me, one who has made politics his study, should be able to judge of the right and the wrong in such things. How would a nation's affairs be carried on if there were not some to earnestly interest themselves about them?"

"Allan, there never will be found wanting in a nation, calm, and pure, and resolute souls, who, by education, by nature, and by habitual *self-government*, are prepared for any emergency—who stand on a foundation of principle, and reason, that is not to be shaken by the bolts of faction, who can battle for the right unflinchingly—who can stand unmoved by the jeers and the scoffing of partizans and demagogues. You seem never to have

calculated the strength of prejudices with the mass of mind—are you quite certain that they have never influenced yourself? At the early age, when you became a voter, do you think that it was with an entirely calm, unprejudiced mind you had decided upon all the manifold questions involved under the name, and head of one party?”

“Of the mass of men to whom your remarks seem to apply as well as to me, I am unable to judge. But, as for myself, I fancy that my eyes were open even at the age you speak of, that I was neither the idiot or the knave you seem to think one must be who votes on attaining his majority. I assure you, Amy, *I had studied* the principles and tenets of the opposing parties, before I advocated either.”

“I have only one thing more to say, Allan,” said Amy, in a conciliatory tone of voice. “I know that I run the risk of displeasing you still further than I already have—but say it I must, for my conscience reproaches me that I have kept silence so long. Every day you live, you are certainly making a still further and more desperate risk of your happiness, and I dare to warn you, for in this I can see clearer than it is possible for you—the public life on which you have embarked, will shipwreck your peace in this life, if you continue to venture on its treacherous waters. I implore you, Allan, to turn now, before it is too late, to quieter paths; they will, in the end, prove far more satisfying. For your own sake chiefly, but for my sake, also, I entreat you to risk no more time and talent in this hazardous game. I do not present this wish to have you regard it merely as a vain woman’s whim, that I may prove to myself I hold some little power or influence over you. Heaven knows, it is not that which has induced me to speak. Do not answer me now—wait and think on what I urge. You *will* think, Allan, will you not? Nay, you *shall not* tell me now!”

He arose to depart, and, taking Amy’s hand, gravely said: “You have proposed questions to me which I shall, indeed, need to consider. And if, Amy, when I have so considered—if *my* sense of duty, and honor, and good faith, lead me in a path different from that which you have pointed out?”

“Oh, it will not—it cannot. Pray for light, Allan, on *this*

subject—human reason and wisdom are so prone to lead us in paths our inclinations point out!”

“But *if*, when I have thought and prayed, if the light shall not dawn and instruct me as you require, what *then*?”

“Go, Allan,” she said, rising and withdrawing her hand, “I fear for you—your words tell me that you will seek the light with eyes blinded—but I pray you may not, it is all that I can do. What I have said, has caused me more sorrow than it can possibly occasion you. God teach you the right.”

A week, after this conversation, passed, and the young politician, in that time, had not presented himself before Amy. But the unwonted absenting of himself was not occasioned by long halting between two opinions. Allan had chosen, and, apparently, irrevocably, the god whom he would serve.

At the end of this time, Amy received from him a note, hurriedly written, which read thus:

“You will have seen, ere this, dear friend, that the choice which you proposed to me in our last interview, has been somewhat peremptorily decided for me by my colleagues, with never a ‘by your leave.’ They have nominated me as a ‘representative in Congress,’ and it was impossible, for reasons which I may not explain just now, for me to decline the honor they intend me—and to be nominated by such men as constitute the majority of voters in this district, *is* an honor. You will assuredly admit that. It is a time when the aid of every man of strength in our party is particularly needed, and it would be base and dishonorable in me to retreat from public life at a time when the cause of some of the dearest rights of men, needs to be strenuously advocated by every one who can lift his voice in behalf of human rights. Do you blame me for the part I have chosen? Knowing your wishes on this point, it had been a source of high gratification to have resigned my will to yours; but, I appeal to you, was it possible? I find myself in a position where I cannot retreat—cannot even promise that the future shall see me ever freed from what you would call the toils of party or politics. For the present, my choice has, as I have stated, been made for me, however it may effect those who are

very dear to my heart, who are held in memory, affection and reverence, *next* to my country, I must abide by it. You have spoken of the inevitable ruin of my happiness by so doing. It was a selfish argument, Amy. Shall a man who *is* a man be willing to retain *happiness* at the expense of a nation's interests, which even one single, earnest voice, may unspeakably promote?

ALLAN."

The reply of Amy Nelson was not written in the first moment of grievous disappointment, when she saw by what plausible arguments Allan had learned to deceive himself. Deliberately as his choice was made, her answer was given.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have received your letter, and have delayed answering it till the conflict in my heart was over. It is past now, and in the quiet of this night, when the seal is set for ever to a prospect once unspeakably bright, I reply. You have made your choice, for despite your words it *is* you who have decided on your destiny, and *not* the men who have nominated you for Congress. You are willing to abide by that choice. God help me to echo your words as sincerely as they were spoken in the first instance. But, Allan, I will not shrink to say to you in this last moment, when the right to so speak is passing away, you have always, you are still deceiving yourself. But that you do not *mean* to deceive *others*, I as firmly believe—the shrine to which I have elevated you in my mind is far too lofty to admit of such a thought respecting you. But—do you remember that day in our childhood when we found the ground birds' nest, how your sympathies were all avowed in favor of the soaring eagle? Do you remember, dear friend, the admiration then so loudly expressed for the aspiring bird who could look right in the face of the sun. And do you think, Allan, that the sympathies and thoughts of childhood have no share in the formation of the man's character? I foresee in the future no end to your political ambition. Heaven grant that it may be *only* the good of our dear country you seek—that if such good may call you to the performance of deeds which shall subject you for a season even to apparent

disgrace, you may be able to endure it. May a happy and an honorable career be in store for you.

"Fare you well, Allan. Cold and impassable as I have seemed to the most of those who know me, you will be generous enough to attribute my motives, in *wishing* the separation that exists henceforth between us, to another cause than want of affection for you. I feel that I should not *always* be able to resist the temptations which ever assail the wife of a successful politician; and as I would avoid contamination, would I shrink from the stains of party strife. God forgive me if I have wronged either you or myself in making this decision! It has been done with the full, the almost overwhelming knowledge of all I sacrifice in giving up your love. I shall watch with an interest which you, I feel, can conceive but may never reciprocate, the future steps of your life. If I have been deceived, if happiness *is* to be found in such paths, may you be unspeakably happy and blessed. If I have been selfish in the desire, so often expressed, that you would retire from public life—political life—if it be *true* that the cause, as advocated by you, is the true one, and may, if successful, conduce to our country's welfare, prosperity and honor—if a voice within you, not to be resisted, has urged you onward, forgive the words of discouragement, so often spoken, and persevere, though the path may lead to fiery trial, sorrow and death; because then there will be within yourself found all that can support and cheer. Farewell, dear Allan! may you never find cause to regret the choice you have made. God bless and guard you—it shall be ever the prayer of

"AMY NELSON."

No persuasion or entreaty on the part of Allan—no arguments of interested and disappointed relatives—no wondering surmises and curiosity-prompted hints of neighbors, could induce the young girl to change the decree which had now gone forth. Allan had chosen his path, and it was not obstinate determination to carry out her own will which induced Amy to persevere in hers. She knew, for she had long watched him with the jealous eyes of love, that he was fast merging into a

demagogue; and soaring on *such* wings, though they might bear to the highest height of political renown, was what she would not and could not bring herself to countenance. Looking with a steadfast eye that was not to be deceived by the show of appearances into the future, she saw how the carking cares of political life, would, if persevered in, encroach further and with continually increasing power on the peace and tranquillity of his heart, and in the end leave him a slave, who was born a freeman.

In the last interview Allan sought as a lover, he said, in reply to Amy's words :

"It is in vain that you bid me seek another wife who will aspire as ambitiously as you assert that I do. I shall certainly never wed another woman. You, of course, are free, but even should you marry, Amy, I never shall consider myself released from the bonds with which love has bound my heart and soul to yours. It is in vain that you urge this separation—it cannot endure; and I must think that it is as sinful as it is unnatural. I know that it has occasioned you much sorrow, but your conduct is still more unjust toward me than it is to yourself."

"I would not of all things believe," answered Amy, "that my welfare or happiness in this world could ever be *nothing* to you. And I know that it will never be possible for me to hear of, or to mark your career, with other feelings than those of deepest interest. I shall rejoice to hear that you always remain faithful to virtue, to your country, and to God. Any other possibility I will not think of. But you err, Allan, in supposing that *you* can go through life shorn of the devoted love and sympathy of woman, such as only a wife can give. I would counsel you earnestly, to early seek one, whose tastes are congenial with your own; a woman who can gaze with an eye clear as your own on the dazzling future which spreads before your imagination, and which you will surely accomplish. Depend upon it, such a companion is what you will need. I do not mean that it is my hope you will seek one whose ambition it is to occupy prominent station, but a woman who can see, and bear, with the keenness, and endurance, of those who are

accustomed to scan the political horizon; one whose morals will not succumb to the narrow desire of outshining others—who will be a comforter, an adviser, a consoler on your life journey. You will feel the need of such a companion every step you advance on your journey. Will you not promise me to seek such an one?"

"I *have* sought her with a momentary prospect of success, but you know how delusive that hope has proved to me. And shall I seek further when you, Amy, of all others might be the friend you have painted? I tell you, you are resisting the call of *duty* so long as you have withdrawn your consent to be mine. Can I not convince you that your fancy has aggravated the perils and misery, you attach to the career of the politician?"

"It is not possible that I have thought so much and so earnestly on this subject in vain—to be deceived at last. If I *am* deceived, let the burden of folly rest with me."

"Hear me, my friend!" he exclaimed, interrupting her, "will you not at least give me a fair trial? Let all things remain as they now are between us, if you *will* have it so. In the course of a few years we shall both be wiser than we are now. We will be able to look on life with a zealous interest, which will savor more strongly of knowledge, and if, at the end of such time, I prove myself unworthy of your hand, then dearest, without a murmur I will resign it."

"For the steadfastness of my own affection, Allan," was the earnest, honest reply, "I am not afraid to answer. You do not need a voucher to it other than your own heart will give. But for yourself—duty may call you to other portions of the world, and you will see to what an humble little ground bird you have chained down your eagle heart and wings. And if you shall ever, under such circumstances, repent the words uttered to-day, think of them as though they had never been said, as though they had never passed the secret chambers of your mind. Free as the eagle I would have you go forth to work out what you have determined to consider your *destiny*—and if your nest shall at last be built on the mountain's summit, I will hope you may not mourn then for a sheltered home

in the humble valley—for myself, I shall only *then* charge you to cherish a friendly remembrance of me.”

“*More* than a friend, Amy—more than a friend for ever. The exigency you suggest, I declare to you is impossible. Depend upon it, I shall come to claim you with a proud heart and lofty look some day, and you will not refuse me then, Amy. I can read your fortune clearly. Do you see those twin stars for ever treading through the heavens side by side? so inseparable are our souls. The frosts of winter, the storms, and blasts, and tempests, *shall not* divide them—neither can the enticements of summer beauty, or blind passion, beguile one from the other. Farewell!”

Truth, nothing but earnest truth, was in the breast of Allan Ross, when he uttered these words—and hope, whose presence and power she would not to herself deny, filled the heart of Amy, even when she had resolved to resign the love of the young would-be Congressman.

His party was successful—Allan was elected; and full of hope and exultant, cheered on by the congratulations of his friends, he went from his native place to the seat of national government, there to enter on the scene of his new labors.

It is needless to follow him through the events of his public life, during the term for which he held his office. The plaudits which his brilliant eloquence gained him from his own party, added but fuel to the fires of ambition—while the attacks upon his honor, his morals, and political honesty, made by the opposition, instead of meeting from him with that calm contempt which such attacks deserved, only goaded him, aroused him to new effort, and opened a fountain of bitterness within his soul. And all unconsciously to the man, the great changes which certainly took place in him were brought about. He knew not that he was becoming cold-hearted, callous, and self-interested—that he was chiefly striving to build up for himself, insensibly perhaps, a pedestal on which he might stand *alone*. In his new and delightful consciousness of power, Allan dreamed himself to be beyond the necessity of heeding the warnings of Amy Nelson; he had quite forgotten them, or thought of them only

as the foolish fears of woman, worthy only to be told in the ears of children.

During the first winter, however, a question was mooted whose consideration by himself, proved the justice of the fears and arguments of "the lady of his love." A point, whose advocacy his moral nature, and the sense of justice he entertained, shrunk from—but! his party advocated it, and the great majority of his constituents were in favor of it! How could he then evade it—how avoid doing as others did—as it would be for his own interest to do? He could not and did not evade it. Allan knew that the eyes of many would be directed toward him in this emergency—and the young man was compelled to survey well and thoughtfully his position.

The contested point was one of absorbing interest to "all those in Congress assembled;" and the people, whose well-being it so intimately concerned, dwelt upon the theme in a manner which convinced the men in office that their power must not be betrayed. At this time, when his mind was conflicting between a sense of justice and a sense of self-interest, two letters reached Allan from people residing in his district, which made the conflict in his mind for a moment sharp and unpleasant, but then for ever decided it.

One, from an influential, wealthy townsman, urged him by every consideration, in which that of self-interest did not figure least or last, to support the measure which would secure the good of the few, against the welfare of the many. Broad hints, which would have disgusted a private individual, were thrown out of brilliant prospects in the future of the young statesman, and the favor of the great—the smiles of increased prosperity in after days.

Now, bearing in mind the moral lessons Amy Nelson had taught him, and regarding with contempt the covert bribe, as he did, it was with a will almost decided in favor of the appeal first made, that Allan turned to the perusal of the other epistle, which presented still more potent reasoning than the former, why the opposite vote should be given in by him. This letter was admirably written, and it did not appeal in vain to the principles of Allan Ross, though, in the intention's fulfilment,

it *did* meet with signal defeat. As well as the writer of the epistle, he knew to which side duty would lead him, but the appealant was unknown to him—he gave no signature—he merely sent his voice, urging the young statesman, by all those arguments an honest man holds sacred, that the rights of the mass of the people, should, by the people's chosen officers, be upheld and sustained.

But to Allan the risk he should incur in complying with the wishes of his unknown correspondent, seemed altogether too great. He could not endure the thought of knowingly taking a mis-step which should end that career at once; therefore, when the decisive time came, he voted with the majority, and betrayed the spirit of moral integrity within him! It was indeed an important movement for him—it stamped his career with success—the rich and the powerful applauded, and the majority of humbler voters were orationed into the belief, that the promising, gifted youth, deserved their support—that he was true to his professions—a friend of the people and of the rights of man.

* * * * *

Behold now our young adventurer, during the second winter spent in Washington, bowing for a moment at another shrine—that of beauty, giving up his heart, and for a time, his will, to a bright and talented Southern lady, whose plantations spread far and wide, whose riches were almost beyond the estimation. And the “rising man” was successful in that attempt also, for the genius and promise and personal attractions of the Northerner were thought well worthy of the prize. Secure of this, Allan thus wrote to Amy Nelson:

“It is as you predicted, my best friend! I *have* found myself unable to bear the loneliness and the want of sympathy my present way of life induces. The love of woman, a warm, true love, that shall fling its arms about me in a never-ending embrace of truthful purity, is what I cannot live without. There are circumstances which forbid my cherishing for a moment the hope of a release from political duties; and, knowing the inflexibility of your will where a conceived duty is concerned,

I have forborne appealing again to your generous and confiding love, which I once hoped, would, notwithstanding the pursuits, see still in the *man* no cause for rejection. This conclusion which I have at last brought myself to entertain, I feel the less difficulty in communicating to you, when I remember that it was *your* suggestion which first called to mind the freedom of my position—a suggestion without which I should have never taken the step I am about to. It is not without pain—I beg to assure you of this now, at this, the last time when such a confession would be permitted by you—it is not without much pain I bid adieu to you to-day. The words of farewell assume a deeper significance than they have ever before, and I feel, in speaking them now, that one of the brightest dreams a mortal ever cherished, is departing—and it is *you* who have made a dream of what might have proved a rejoicing reality. It is passed now, and I can only add, my prayer is, that the satisfaction arising from the performance of *duty* may never desert you. Peace be within your heart for ever. ALLAN."

And it was thus that Amy answered this last conclusive missive:

"I have just received your letter, dear Allan, and it is with sincere pleasure that I hasten to reply. With all my heart do I congratulate you. The stirring times in the political world have, during the past winter, served to convince me, more and more every day, that you have indeed plunged into a vortex from which it will be scarcely possible for you ever to extricate yourself. May she, whom you have chosen to bear your fortune, (very gifted, and beautiful, and good, I have fancied her,) may she through life prove a blessing to you, cheering, if she may not guide, and lessening your self-imposed burden, inasmuch as she may. The ground bird will watch the soarings of the eagle with a never diminished affection and interest, and it will be her prayer, breathed forth in the silent night and in the busy, toiling day, that he may no more be blinded 'in the face of the sun!' God and conscience be ever with you, to guide and bless. AMY."

* * * * *

I saw in a vision (*perhaps*—do you think it, my dearest?) two beings moving through the quiet walks of life, loving and beloved.—Beings whom the world had pronounced worthy to wear the crown of highest honor; eagles who might look unfaltering and unshrinking on the strongest blaze of sunlight—who, notwithstanding, shunned the broad paths, the market-places, and chief seats of the synagogues.

Age had fallen on them both, and peace had added her solemn, angelic benediction—and love had flooded their hearts with genial light, and hallowed them, and consecrated them to one another with a holy kiss. There were furrows on the brow of one—his hair was gray—he was an old man who was done for ever with the busy toil, the restless striving, and the mad endeavor of life.

And the lady by his side, she also was “well stricken in years,”—but there were no traces visible in her of the care which had entered deep into his heart, which had furrowed brow and cheek with many and heavy lines. That she had lived humbly before God, and justly and lovingly with all the world, was plainly to be gathered from the calm, open, and generous expression of her face.

Would you have guessed that they were Amy Nelson and Allan Ross? They were—for the eagle had at last in a joyful and eager haste descended from his position in the clouds, (won with untiring labor,) to seek a shelter in the lonely, humble ground bird’s nest!

Honors had thickened upon Allan in his youth. That one sacrifice he made to principle in his early manhood, had not been lost upon the world, which knows full well how to repay such offerings made to the god of ambition—it was the immediate cause of a great and a speedy increase of honor and dazzling notoriety. Allan went abroad, a minister to one of the proudest courts of Europe, and maintaining there with fidelity and ability the honor of his country, on a return home he was rewarded with a higher office that was “in the gift of the free people.”

And was the bride he had chosen such as Amy Nelson in the loneliness of her home prayed she might be? Not exactly.

Allan had not found a *perfect* woman in the Southern belle. As fully as he could have wished, the desire for distinction, for honor, for place in the upper room, was developed in his wife—but she was wanting in all that nobler self-respect, all that higher principle of action which marked little Amy. She proved independent. Yes—in a way—not the best way, however; for she was not so independent of the world, that she could live without its approbation, its plaudits, its poor gifts. The ambition of the husband found in the wife too fruitful soil; it sprung up and bore fruit a thousand fold! It was now she who was never satisfied. Her quick thought spied out a multiplicity of honors which it was possible for him to win, and the natural false pride of her soul sought in him its gratification. And, alas, that I should write it! it was through her instrumentality that Allan Ross suddenly dampened the high hopes some of his friends had dared to form of him, by basely pandering to the men in power, and becoming more perfectly the demagogue, which Amy had foreseen he might and probably would prove.

It was a dazzling height of glory to which finally the eagle soared, but he chose the wrong path, and his wings became scorched in the high flight, and when he stood in the purity of the sunlight, there were glaring imperfections too clearly discernible in the “idol of the people,” whose existence had never been suspected before.

While he was aiming at that greatness, that height of power, his beautiful wife—died; leaving to him the guidance and the care of the young children Heaven had given to their keeping. Often during the widowed years that followed, wondering thoughts as to the fortune of Amy Nelson would cross his mind—but shame and sorrow for the past prevented his seeking her home, in which he well knew she was living still, and in loneliness. Perhaps, he thought, that when a few more years had come and gone, and he was in the occupancy of the great position he coveted, that then he would seek her out, and lay at her feet all his honor, and claim only in return the love she had borne him in her youth.

But Allan's dream was broken to fragments—brilliant fragments they were, worthless without comeliness.

The life of anxiety which he had led had shattered his health, robbed him of his most efficient energy, and in the very time when he was preparing for a final race after greatness and power, disease prostrated him—left him weak and helpless as a child.

It was the time for the triumph of his foes—and he had many—the prize for which the exertions of years had been unweariedly made floated beyond his reach, and in the valley of shadows he found himself at last, wearied with struggle, disgusted with his life-long toil, longing for death. But in that moment a ministering angel came and stood beside him. It was her voice which aroused him to life and to hope again. To life which spread before him in all the radiant beauty which it wore in his youth—to hope which could never more bind itself blindly to the interests of party or to slavish ambition.

They are one—the parted for years. The name of the great politician has yet a sound on the earth, but never again has he been tempted, (since his eyes have opened to the beauty of contentment and peace,) to enter those lists where once he sought for glory, as though it were man's highest good. And blessed is he now in the children of his early manhood—the wife of his old age! Ask him! All honor to the ground-birds, the joyous singers of the lowly nests! Their power surpasses that of the eagle in his mountain nest, or in his sunward flight!

HEARTS OF OAK.

IN a little cottage that stood in the shadow of the great Foundling Hospital, in the town of Wells, a school for a few blind children was opened, and Miss Florence Swaine was announced as an instructress. For several months this lady had been engaged in teaching a few unfortunates within the walls of the hospital, and it was the tact, ingenuity, and patience, displayed by her, which suggested to Mrs. Hammel the idea of opening a school for her under more favorable auspices; for it was thought that if such were started for her, and disconnected in the minds of the people from a place of public charity, its prosperity would be greatly increased.

Florence Swaine was deemed particularly competent to manage this humble establishment, not because of her long experience in the concerns of life—she was not quite twenty years of age when the trial was first ventured—but because she was gentle-hearted and patient, and had herself been educated among foundlings, and, that she had been all her life in some degree a teacher as well as playmate for the little ones who were sheltered under that roof with herself.

One needed not to see Florence in any particular light, or under any extraordinary circumstances, needed not to see her face animated with any peculiar expression, in order to satisfy himself as to whether she were beautiful. She was at all times lovely and lovable, yet by no means a perfect creature, in any sense of the word. Her figure was of ordinary height, slight, but not fragile, at least not indicative of weakness, though perhaps the impression of strength conveyed to others by her appearance resulted chiefly from the fact that weakness was some-

thing wholly foreign to her mental and spiritual nature. Her brown, glossy hair, had a peculiar beauty, and her light, dazzling blue eyes shone with the glory of sapphires; they looked a purity which her life outlived. She was very fair—she was very beautiful. Was her moving, breathing, human form, a tabernacle fit, think you, for a heart of oak? Perhaps it is your opinion that bone and sinew, length, and breadth, and flesh, are the out-going, or the embodiment of strength?

Nay, it had been quite impossible for any one to think of weakness and Florence Swaine together. That was not the word to apply to her, nor the idea. The expression of her face was very sweet and benevolent, but it told more than that she was a mere kind and just mortal; yea, even so much, as that she could do without the love of men and women, that she could exist solitary and isolated, should occasion demand; and if you had chanced to see her at her prayers, you would know *why*. She knew what nature had done for her, yet she wanted no admiration—she, a foundling! She had no wish to attract attention, but she was well prepared to stand in her own defence, and that of her little foster-sister, against the world. Her lot was cast in no pleasant place. She was a child given to reflection, and she beheld in herself one of that class whose lives are too frequently illustrated with martyr-tears and martyr-blood; that class whose moral power is their only glory, whose good and honest name, whatever befalls their heart, must always stand unimpeachable.

When the teacher went from the hospital to open her school and home in the cottage, she was accompanied by a widow-woman who had lived many years in the employ of the matron, Mrs. Hammel, and by a young girl who had always stood in the relationship of sister to Florence, though none could tell if there was any natural connection between them. All that was known of the origin of either was this: One evening, in the winter of 1815, a child, to whom was appended the name Florence Ida Swaine, was found at the door of the hospital; and three years later another infant, named Clara Swaine, was discovered in the same place, and received into the same fostering care. Several particulars relating to the manner in which

they were left, and their names, induced the suspicion that they might be near of kin, sisters perhaps, and as sisters they grew up, in their beautiful affection. If there was no real relationship existing between them, it still seemed a providential matter that they were thus brought together, for they needed, each of them, and Clara in an especial degree, a friend who should be bound to them in another way than by a mere ordinary tie of acquaintance.

The love of Florence for Clara knew no bound ; it strengthened her ability to penetrate into the very nature of her sister ; it enabled her to discern clearly the feeble mind that looked to hers with a reverential regard little short of worship. For counsel and guidance and affection, Clara turned to Florence as a weak, frail, timid child, to a parent ; but it was in vain that the elder sister looked to the younger for a reciprocity of *more* than affection : Clara could impart no strength, she could never give light when the mind of Florence was in doubt or darkness. When she said, "*I love you*," all had gone out from her that could bless another ; there was no other word of power that she knew. But that word, how sweet, how precious it was !

The younger of these sisters had not the exquisite beauty of the elder ; she was frailer, bodily, as well as mentally ; but her surpassing grace, her charming manner, natural as that light in the eyes of Florence, supplied the want of real beauty ; or rather, it was another form of beauty. There was a pleasing and entire unconsciousness in the expression of that singular fascination ; it lurked in her every movement and word, and bound hearts most strongly to her, and bound them because in the simplest out-going of the life of Clara Swaine was a visible manifestation of the fact that she could only live in and through love.

Those children looked astray in the hospital among other foundlings. A voice seemed speaking from their lives telling of grievous wrongs done them. That place, where the offspring of want and guilt and shame were gathered, seemed no place for them. They would have looked at home in a palace, dwelling in sunshine and splendor, fondled and petted ; but not there,

where they seemed like flowers transplanted from a green-house to the care of cold and unappreciative hearts: they reminded one of too harsh contrasts, too diverse experiences.

In bitter sorrow many years of the life of Florence Swaine had passed, and she had never conquered that sorrow, nor found any solace save in Clara's fondness, till the idea of self-reliance began to unfold itself to her understanding. She had no faith in the common presumption that she was, (or if they were sisters, that *they* were) orphaned, parentless. But they were unrecognised and unclaimed; they had been left to the disposal of fate for years, and whether guilt, or shame, or misfortune, or despair, had given them over to the tender mercies of a public, was left a roving thought, suspicion, fear, that could in one way alone be quieted: by a patient, prayerful hope. Years passed after she had become a thinking being, and had learned all of her history that was known to her protectors, before she could at all reconcile herself even to the thought of orphanage. Early in life, she had been a gay, light-hearted thing; there were few brighter or more bird-like spirits tabernacled among the little foundlings; but life and the world were saddened to her mind from the moment she learned all that could be learned of the doubts attending their parentage. It was a source of murmuring discontent to her, in the first years of an intelligent girlhood, to feel how entirely they (for it was always 'they' in her thought,) had been shut out from the fairer social world, the victims of she scarcely knew what, but helpless in that victimage, and utterly weak to master circumstance. In those years of darkness, when her indignant and rebellious thoughts and tears could not avail her, nor her own longings help, she gave lamentably little evidence of a strong mind, or great heart, or lofty will. Tears and melancholy and repining were her friends, for Clara had not yet attained to *her* stature of dreary knowledge; and it was not till years marked by conflict, and soul-struggling, vain hope, and vainer despair had gone by, that, at last, "knowing her weakness" by a grievous experience, Florence turned, and sought for strength where it can alone be found. Then she knew that she was saved; knew from *what* the great DELIVERER saved her. The star of love, the light of

heaven, the grace of God shone for her ; and in the brightness of that light her soul trode over Jordan, and through the pride of Jerusalem and the shades of Gethsemane, until it reached Olivet, and there she bowed to ask anew, and to receive. And though now even she could not banish from her thoughts its absorbing idea, she was rescued from the miseries of its power. The philosophy of the Christian had come to her aid ; a hope that transcended the mortal hope had grown up within her ; and for the working out of this new faith, she looked to HIM as its Finisher, who was its Author.

II.

FLORENCE SWAINE was by no means the most imaginative person in the world, and she became less a dreamer when she had acquired a steadfast, religious faith ; but as she awakened to a fuller life of perception, and thought, and knowledge, she was persuaded, to an absolute certainty evidence could hardly have deepened, that the position of poverty and illegitimacy, which she and Clara were doomed to hold before the world, was not theirs by right. Her conviction would scarcely have availed her in making good such claim in a court of law, but it was a comforting thought that they *might*, one day, be recognised and claimed. The assurance would have been of little worth, coming as it did through such a mere shadowy vista of faith in the ultimates of justice, had it not shown its power in strengthening and comforting the heart of Florence. The faith was not vain, in that she was prepared by it for earnest working, and in that she was thus calmed to the conviction that even if her life was given by the retributive wrath of God, HE would, nevertheless, not fail to be her FATHER, if she would be HIS child.

There was nothing of this high, religious faith, nor of the noble transparency of earnest truth, in the character of Clara Swaine. The dreamer, more than the worker, was unfolded in her ; real truth had not made so searching and grievous a revelation for her, and her heart satisfied itself with looking for help, encouragement, guidance, and strength, to her human friends. She was thoroughly amiable and lovely, and that, it seemed,

was all. Her trustings went far; they were given in entire self-distrust; and it was apparent, to any clear-sighted observer of character, that though safe while loving wills shielded her, if by chance or fate she should be left to herself or to evil temptations, there was nothing of mental or spiritual nature that she could bring from within to oppose such influences.

After the removal of the sisters and the widow (who was to act in the capacity of house-keeper for them) to their new home, Clara began to busy herself with her needle in fancy workings, her taste and ingenuity inclining her to such labors: by such pursuits she was to furnish her share toward the support of the household. The trustees of the hospital required a mere nominal rent of their new tenants for the first year, and little fear was entertained in any quarter, that the experiment of the young girls toward personal independence would fail, aided as they were by the counsel and good word of Mrs. Hammel, and the clear brain and warm heart of Florence.

In the course of a few weeks, twelve children assembled to receive the daily attention and instruction of the new teacher. Some, but not all of these little ones, were blind; and the most of the unfortunates belonged to the hospital; two only were from independent families living in the town. The patience and wisdom which Florence displayed in conducting the education of these infant minds and hearts, and the simple, earnest good-will with which she pursued her calling, inspired great respect for her in the minds of the good people of Wells, as she became known to them; and, moreover, the influence of Mrs. Hammel—for she was a woman extensively known and admired—conspired to increase the general confidence in the new school; and, as time passed on, many pupils were secured for it, besides the blind.

Among the first of the children sent from the town to Florence for instruction, was a little half-blind girl, named Rose Percy. She became a pupil because of her mother's charitable regard for two young girls just setting out in life, rather than for any great benefit that she herself might derive; for all little Rose could learn must be taught her by sound, not sight. On her first attendance at school, the child was always accompanied

by a boy cousin, of about her own age ; but when he afterward went from Wells, the brother of Rose assumed the office of guide and protector.

Willis Percy was at that time little more than twenty-two years of age. He was a student of theology, preparing to embrace that profession to which his father during his life-time had done honor. This profession had not been chosen by the son for the purpose of getting a living among men. Various bequests to the family from time to time, together with the mother's patrimony, made the Percys independent, and there was no need for exertion on the part of the eldest son, beyond his own soul's need. That soul had been tossed for years on the sea of doubt ; it had been driven over the sea of despair, also. In philosophic dreams, in the pleasures of the gay, and ambition of the worldly, he had sought for a guide, a comforter, a rest, but had not found it until at last he looked upward : then he saw the heavens open, and heard a voice from the eternal deep proclaiming, while a light dawned for him, "This is the way : walk ye in it ;" and from that day he was decided as to whom he should serve. His abilities were of a common order ; he would be known, if known at all, probably by his goodness, his sterling honesty, faith, and consistency. Distinguishing characteristics enough in this day, some might assert, taking certain known facts into consideration. No ; his temptation would doubtless not present itself in the way of popular applause.

Florence Swaine perceived all this from the first, and her appreciation for the brother of little Rose was greatly heightened by the conviction that his only ambition, if the word may be thus used, was to be known among men as a devout and faithful servant of the MASTER he confessed before them. And on his part, the brief moments in which he by degrees formed an acquaintance with Florence, had given as free an insight into her character. The few snatches of conversation held with her, when he came daily as his sister's guardian, bringing her, and sometimes accompanying her from school, induced an urgent wish for fuller intercourse ; and this was accomplished when Florence became his pupil, and studied the languages. In these

studies, proposed by Mr. Percy, and gladly entered into by both sisters, a progress was made as flattering to the instructor as to themselves; but the teacher was also learning a lesson, one other, and by far the sweetest version of the primal word of the "grand credo" he had ever yet met. Power to lead a life of such purity, consistency, and perseverance, as he saw that elder sister leading, was just what he needed to have brought before him, in order that his idea of true moral beauty in action might be filled out and exalted. Young though he was, he had begun to turn, and with longing, too, from the hard strength, the cold intellect, the stern defiance and restless impulse, which had seemed to him once the sublimest manifestations of human power; and as he was thus turning away, most fortunately for himself, he met with her in whom were an intellect, a resolution, and an impulse, that were all glorified with light from the heart. In the child-like innocence and purity of Florence Swaine; in her beauty and religion; in her constancy and steadfastness, manifested in the pursuit of what he *knew* must be wearying tasks; in the hope, clear, but not glowing with the joyous brightness of the hopes of youth, with which she went on in her appointed path; in all she said and did, which marked her so peculiarly and beautifully feminine, even among women, he found more than enough to admire, full enough to love.

The impression made by these two mortals was thus an equal and mutual one. Her love for the good, the exalted, the truthful, which had never found its satisfaction before, because she had not chanced to see it associated with the enhancing charm of youth and enthusiasm, found an abiding-place now in her thought of Willis Percy. The most absorbing passion Florence had known heretofore was affection for her young sister. That was a "passion of sympathy," which seemed destined to never grow beyond sympathy, and there was danger, because of powerlessness to grow, that it would end in disappointment. This new affection differed not so much in kind as in degree, from the other. And it differed very much in degree. The sympathy, when it appeared consciously, for him, could not take the form of pitying love, as it did where Clara was concerned; for him it was appreciative, and uplifted by a consciousness of

equality, and went out from her seeking a blessing. In his strong and healthful life she found the encouragement and exalting tendency which acted on her charm-like, as her own words and courage had always on her sister; and it was with much the same confidence Clara had known, that *she* turned and found what she most needed in him.

If this friendship could have continued for ever in its tranquil and perfect state, she would have been satisfied with it—would neither have asked nor wished for more. It would have made the pride and blessing of her life; she would have found in it comfort, and strength, and peace; and this, though absence and separation, in all but spirit, followed. But such a union was not what would content him.

It was long after the beginning of their acquaintance before he acknowledged this; and it would be difficult to say whether his disappointment or pleasure exceeded, when he listened to the answer she made to his confession. It is certain, however, that he pleaded in vain when she thus expressed her firm determination: "Until the doubt respecting my parentage is removed, I will be the wife of no man. If it be that disgrace attaches to my appearance in this world, I can bear *that* better if alone. A day might come when you would wish that no tie united us; and—it must *not* come." When he replied with expostulation, "I am not looking to the past, nor to its secrets, for happiness, but only to the future and to you; is not that enough?" she answered: "Whatever seems to me wrong-doing, and so much opposes itself to my own sense of justice and duty, I will abide by. Would it be wise to bid me seek another standard whereby to judge my actions, than that law of conscience which God has given me?" And from this determination she was not to be moved. It was no new subject of thought with Florence. She had contemplated the effects of such a decision before his love gave *life* to the idea; she had decided, long before meeting with him, that she would never, while *that* mystery was unrevealed, assume any new ties with the world. This resolution was made only for and to herself; she neither took Clara into counsel, nor had a wish to influence her in any like way.

III.

THE office of instructor was not resigned by young Percy after the conscience of Florence had placed him *almost* in the position of a rejected lover. She could at first have wished this otherwise; but when she saw what a restraint he placed on every thought and expression that tended Florence-ward, content to appear only as her friend and teacher, and Clara's friend and teacher as well, she could but be satisfied.

But in the second year of the school-keeping, Mr. Percy was ordered south by his physicians, for his health suddenly failed him. Undue application to study was assigned as the cause, and a cessation from all close confinement was enjoined upon him. On his departure he wrote to Florence:

"I could find it in my heart to bitterly reproach you, if I did not hold you far too dear for that; because it is your fault that I go alone on this pilgrimage in search of health. I could find it in me to reproach you for mistaking pride for duty. You need to repent of that pride, dear Florence. Heaven send you grace that you may quickly do so. Do not think of me as having gone on a pleasure trip. I leave my happiness behind me, though peace goes with me, for I carry a conviction of which you must not deprive me, that I shall one day revisit the beautiful world to which I am now going, with her who can make all things in this life good and fair to me. God bless you, noble-hearted Florence, and for your sake (for I know it would make you happier; and for my sake too, because from your stern resolution I have otherwise no hope) enlighten the darkness that obscures your past. Do I err in imagining that it is not wholly for yourself that you wish the mystery cleared? Am I far wrong in indulging the precious hope that the longing on your part has a fuller significance than it once had? Is not something more than your own pride involved? Forgive my asking it. We are selfish creatures, and can never enough tell our love, can never often enough be assured that others care for us. I have no gloomy forebodings respecting the results of this voyage; do not let my physician's mistake alarm you.

Perhaps I have applied somewhat too diligently of late, for a more than worldly ambition has been inspiring me; nevertheless I feel as strong as a lion, and a few weeks of rest at home would be as beneficial doubtless as this act of vagrancy. I go for quite another reason than is imagined; but perhaps *you* have guessed it? I have an inclination to try life—to know what it would be without you, Florence; but I have a prophetic idea of the very spirit in which I shall return: how the distance, as it lessens, will seem the more intolerable; how as I come I shall long for wings of the eagle, for the wings of the wind and steam will seem to flag and fail. I would that you could speak to me now and assure my heart of a welcome *home*, dear, dear Florence. God be with you, and aid you in every time of need.

“WILLIS PERCY.”

Not long after the departure of the student from Wells, a gentleman who had a slight acquaintance with Mrs. Hammel came, attended by her, to the cottage, bringing with him a child of one of his tenants, a precocious girl in whom he had taken some interest, and whose education he was determined now to superintend. It was by the advice of Mrs. Hammel that he sought shelter and primary instruction for the girl in the house of Florence Swaine.

Giles Gerard, Esq., was a childless widower, a man of great wealth, whose castle-like residence stood on the banks of the river D——, in a most romantic region of country, distant about ten miles from Wells. So little of this gentleman's time, since the death of his wife, which occurred in his and her youth, had been spent in his own home or its neighborhood, that Mr. Gerard was scarcely known personally, in the town to which he brought his protégé. Mrs. Hammel's acquaintance with him however was not confined wholly to his reputation as a man of great wealth: she was the daughter of the house-keeper who had long lived in the employ of the elder Mr. Gerard, and many of her earliest recollections were associated with his son, the present owner of one of the noblest estates in the country. Yet as a man she knew little of him: had she

known more than that he was rich, and immensely so, and gentlemanly in appearance, and of high standing in the world, she would hardly have introduced him into the house of the two young creatures she loved so well.

The impression left on the mind of Florence after her first interview with this man, was, that he was the most elegant person she had ever beheld. One whose circle of acquaintance was far more extensive than her own, might, with equal truth, have said the same thing. His stately figure seemed the very type of natural nobility, and his handsome face and fascinating manner had been a theme of praise in prouder scenes than she had ever imagined; and it was not possible that he should come strengthened with the experience of forty years, and all outward advantages, to persons like those orphaned sisters, whose whole nature and thought was a romance, without producing an unusual effect on imagination, and in heart.

The elder sister's fancy was sufficiently excited to hold him a fixed subject of thought for hours after their first meeting. The mysteries which his fathomless eyes suggested, but revealed not, the inner tone of his subdued, yet commanding and thrilling voice, the mingling of grace with a sovereign dignity that she had never seen assumed by mortal man before, enchanted, while it failed to please her. The subject of these unwonted meditations had been as sensibly impressed by the loveliness of Florence Swaine, as she had been by his appearance; but it did not impress him in the way that "the grace, the more than beauty," the shrinking womanliness, the manifestly dependent spirit of Clara afterwards did. Towards her he was irresistibly attracted, and acted upon, magnetically it must have been, certainly with an entire unconsciousness on her part, and in a way and to a degree that perfectly astonished himself. Gerard had won many, and broken some hearts in his day, but he had never pursued his conquests among weak women, for weakness had never till now been invested in a charm so irresistible to him. In Clara, weakness did not bear the superscription of either vanity, or ignorance, or puerility; it was the weakness and beauty and charm of a thorough child, (not of a child-wonder,) united with the sense, and thought, and action,

of ordinary womanhood. It was by her trustfulness, innocence and artlessness that he was captivated; there was such a reverential deference and confidence in her manner toward those merely older than herself, as made him quite long to be worshipped by her, as he knew she would worship if she loved at all. He never on occasion of his visits (frequently and ostensibly made on his protégé's account), held much conversation with Clara, unless it may have been with his eyes, which were for ever seeking hers while he spoke with Florence; yet consciousness was long in making that gaze uncomfortable or unbearable to her. When it finally did one day accomplish this, his voice went flying with a new emphasis through her heart like a flash of lightning, and she felt the blood violently rushing to her face. Almost at that same moment came an imagining that she believed was a blessing: perhaps he was thinking of her then as she of him! who could tell?

Every Saturday without fail Mr. Gerard drove over to Wells to visit the little scholar, sometimes bringing her parents in his carriage, and sometimes conveying her back to them for a Sunday visit. On such occasions he never lost the opportunity for an hour's conversation with the young instructress, and he often materially benefited her by his kind and valuable suggestions. At these times Clara was usually present, and occasionally she held a part in the conversations; and so week by week went on.

He must early have been aware that love was growing to be a passion in her soul, and that her love was for him. He had lived full long enough in the world to learn the signs and symbols of character and feeling. Thus, when he recollected how she was in those days when he first met her, how unconcerned and unconstrained she had been, meeting him always with mere calm and simple courtesy, and thought of the gradual change, the change of which he imagined she herself was not yet aware, but which to him betokened all that was going on within her heart, he was, he could not avoid being, certain that she loved him. The extent of that predilection he resolved to prove.

When Christmas came, it brought a splendid gift for Clara, in the shape of a bracelet of diamonds, with a very flattering,

and merely flattering, note, that for one moment almost turned the head of the surprised and delighted girl. In that moment her face glowed with delight, and her heart beat fast to a tune of joy. But then she thought of Florence, and the remembrance of her led to a re-perusal of the note. A painful expression usurped the place of that bright smile when she thought of her sister, and for an instant she could have wished herself alone, that none other than her own will might be consulted; but in a moment more the regret vanished, leaving not a trace; and she felt it was indeed a great blessing to have one near, wise to counsel her. Thinking thus, with the gift and the note in her hand, she arose, and passed to the door of her chamber; but she paused when that was reached, and looked around as though half frightened. In that glance her eyes fell on the little table heaped with work furnished by many friends, and she broke into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

It was only because she was so excited, so bewildered, so overcome with the tumult of her thoughts. That *he* should have sent *her* such a gift! She had taken up her burden of work that Christmas morning with a very grateful heart, and unconsciously, "while plying her needle and thread," she had dreamed of him. She felt very happy, for she was not aspiring, she built no air-castles; and Florence was so kind, and life around her so peaceful, so pleasant! Clara never indulged in bitter thoughts or speculations relating to her past, as Florence often did. That idea had no polarity for the sensitiveness of her soul. She was happy in the just-gone minutes, and now she wept and was wretched! How could a gift have power to so change the hue of all things?

More than an hour passed before she again arose for the purpose of seeking Florence. When she did so, all traces of grief were gone from her face; and her sister did not even guess at the tumult which had been raging so recently in her darling's heart when they two stood together.

Going up to Florence with nervous rapidity, Clara uncovered the gift, held it in all its wondrous splendor before her eyes, and said, gayly:

"Mr. Gerard's Christmas gift! Imagine what I'm going to do with it, *mon amie*?"

"What, pray?" was the simple interrogation of Florence; but there was eager anxiety in her face as she asked it.

"Return the bauble at once, and tell the giver that Miss Clara Swaine has many thanks for the generous donor, but his gift is quite too grand for a seamstress."

"Well done, my sweet sister! I was half fearful."

"That I would accept it?"

"Yes."

"Possible? Then you do not half know me yet, it seems."

"But you say the gift is too much. Would you accept *any* gift from him, Clara?"

"I am not at all sure that I would."

"Then let your answer express as much, dearest. Let him know that we, that *you* need no remembrances *from your friends*. Such as are worth bearing in mind need not buy a place."

"But, Florence, you would not call it *buying*? I presume the idea would strike Mr. Gerard as utterly ridiculous."

"Why return his gift, then, if it does not appear to you in some such light, as an impertinence on his part almost, for even proffering it? He knows enough of the world's ways to be aware of that; and that it would be something worse than ignorance on your part that allowed you to accept it."

"I think just as you do. What is your opinion of Mr. Gerard, after all?"

"What is yours, Clara?"

"Nay, that's not fair. But I'll answer, notwithstanding, in one word: *Magnificent*."

"It's the very word. A great pity that these magnificent things rarely possess the searching power that can find the way into hearts, isn't it?" And Florence fixed her brilliant eyes on Clara as she asked; while *she* busied herself in wrapping the bracelet in its tissue foldings, and restoring it to its case, arose when that was done, and, with a careless "Yes," went to write the proposed note.

IV.

THE attention of Florence was now immediately drawn from Clara by a new unfolding of her own "heart-history." This was occasioned by the sudden and unanticipated death of Mrs. Percy, the mother of Willis and little Rose. Her disease was of the heart, and she was withdrawn from the life of earth to the life of heaven, bearing no traces of long wanderings through the valley of Shadow. When the physicians, who had been hastily called to her aid, acquainted her with the result of their consultation, she at once dismissed them and every hope of life, and with all speed sent for Florence Swaine.

Though her son had never confided his love for the young teacher to his mother, she had more than guessed at it; and by putting various facts that came to her knowledge together, she had arrived at nearly the whole truth of the matter. She saw Willis go from home, his lips still sealed to that story which her tender mother-heart longed to know, and did not herself speak, because her soul paid deference to his soul's secret; but now, when she knew she was dying, it was to Florence, the woman whom *he* loved, that she turned with yearning: she could not depart without blessing her.

When Florence obeyed the call, which she did at once, Mrs. Percy was not satisfied till they and Rose were alone together; and when the young girl had seated herself close beside the sufferer's bed, with voice almost inaudible, but wholly satisfied look, she said:

"Miss Swaine, you see, it is *true*, in such an hour as we think not, the Son of man cometh. Be ready, prepare; you may be surprised. Florence, child, can you take my Rose under your charge, *as a sister*, till Willis comes back?" Seeing she hesitated for a moment, Mrs. Percy added: "Do not delay the answer. Are you afraid to promise? Tell me, child, will you not receive my blessing as a mother? May Rose find an elder sister in you? or am I deceived? Is there no engagement, no union of any kind between you and my dear son? I should be proud and happy to think there was."

"Rose shall indeed be a sister to me. If a day ever comes

when I *can* answer Mr. Percy's love as he desires, it will be a joy to think that you were willing to bless me as your child, dear Mrs. Percy."

Florence knelt as she spoke, for her friend motioned her to do so, and the hands of the dying woman pressed softly on her head. What a thrill of joy was that sweeping through her soul, then, even though she knew it to be a mother's love that was being withdrawn from earth; for it was *his* mother who was blessing *her*!

Florence remained with Mrs. Percy till she had breathed her last; and that night, when her parent's eyes were closed forever, little Rose was taken home with her new sister, consecrated to that relationship by the words and blessing of one dying, and from that time, she shared the bed, and the substance, and the love of Florence Swaine. It seemed not strange to any (most fortunately was this true,) that the child should be committed to the teacher's care until her brother should return; for the thorough moral independence and good sense of their former pastor's widow, had inspired the people of Wells with a great affection and respect for her. The confidence Mrs. Percy displayed in the teacher by this act, was very beneficial to Florence, for it increased the confidence of others. She was aided thus in a pecuniary way in the increase of scholars, and by the residence of Rose in the family, according to the mind of Clara and Mrs. Hammel and many of the townspeople; but what hue did the fact take in her mind? Ah, there how far the thought of worldly prosperity fell below the rich addition that was made to the joy of her struggling heart! To that had been added a consolation unspeakable and full of hope.

Giles Gerard was not, after all, so much offended by the return of his gift as Clara had—yes—*feared* he might be. She dreaded more than she would confess, even to herself, the results which might follow this step. But she needed not to fear. A difficulty in the way to accomplishing an object, was never known to discourage him; and when he met Clara, the following week, it was with more cordiality and deference than ever, yet with an *apparent* embarrassment; and he said, frankly,

looking straight into her eyes, with an expression that told he would say it on his knees before her, if he thought she would allow it :

"You have taught me a lesson I needed to learn ; no woman had ever the goodness to teach it me before. Pardon the ignorance that presumed so boldly on your kindness."

He spoke the flattering words in a tone so really humble, that Clara felt, in turn, almost humiliated, and with a feeling of self-reproach, that also extended toward Florence, she said, falteringly : "Pardon me, and the circumstances which compelled me to—to—perhaps wound. I was ——." Her voice completely failed here ; and however "ignorant" Giles Gerard may have been in the lore of gift-giving, he was sufficiently well versed in the language of love, to feel sure he had guessed in those broken words a secret, which, for her part, the poor girl would not, unasked and voluntarily, have revealed for the world.

He offered no more gifts. He needed only to seek her society often as his own inclination demanded ; to converse in her hearing with Florence, and the work was done. Clara Swaine loved him devoutly as the most exacting lover could have wished. She loved as I imagine women of her nature do always. Her very being became absorbed into his ; her will, her mind, her heart, her entire spiritual life. Love proclaimed himself her master ; there was nothing else to be looked for ; *he* looked for nothing but a total self-abnegation on her part. Before his passion for her was an avowed reality, she felt the witch-work going on in her heart ; all the torturing changes, the torment, the bliss, the joy, the despair, of an unassured love. She was sick, she was glowing with brilliant and gay hopes : the thought had been with her that he was only trifling ; the conviction had been with her that the passion was a mutual one.

The manifest change that had taken place in Clara, the state of tumult in which her mind and heart were thrown from the ominous Christmas-day, did not escape the notice of Florence ; and it troubled and grieved her more than she would acknowledge to herself, and the more because she saw and felt keenly

that Clara was no longer so trustful and confiding with her as she had been.

The indignant idea that Gerard was trifling with her sister, at one time prevailing, and then the doubt as to whether, in another case, she could be happy with a man like him, if fortune united them, cast continual shadows over the daily life of the elder sister; and when she saw how his repeated and lengthened visits produced no other results than disturbance of Clara's spirits, and an unfavorable mental excitement, she resolved to bring the affair to a climax at once.

Florence accordingly took occasion, one day, when Mr. Gerard was leaving the house, after a second visit that week, to say to him, in the most courteous, yet firmest manner possible, that, if his visits were made so frequently for his own gratification, merely, she would greatly prefer that they were discontinued, even if the removal of his protégé should necessarily follow. Her listener quickly banished his look of astonishment when he met that just rebuke, and, after a moment's hesitation, said:

"Forgive me. With your permission I will at once speak with Clara. I have done wrong in delaying. But, believe me, I ought not to be subject to your censure."

"Nay," she answered, embarrassed and surprised in turn, though she knew herself justified in taking that stand, "far be from me even the appearance of forcing you to an expression of feeling that may really not exist on your part. I only feel that it would be better for you to visit my sister less often, if you have not a much more than ordinary interest in her; indeed, it were better for all of us."

"And I say, dear madam, that, with your permission, I will this instant seek her for my wife. She is more to me than I can acknowledge to any but her."

Florence made no further opposition, for she saw—as far as she could see, and believed he was in earnest, as he was. And before Mr. Gerard left Wells that day, he and Clara were betrothed.

v.

THERE was an obviously bright future spreading before Clara Swaine. Her mind was troubled by none of those thoughts

which held Florence in bondage when her heart longed to utter its glad reply to Willis Percy's love. But the high and proud place she seemed destined in coming time to hold as the wife of the great man of the county was not, brilliant as it appeared, the most glorious or welcome idea that presented itself. It was enough for her to have won the love of such a man; his wealth and social place were nothing compared with that idea; and there was no need that he should draw on his credulity in order to believe it.

So was it proved that, with all her sensitiveness and delicacy, Clara's womanliness did not *approach* to that unfolded in the gentle but heroic nature of Florence Swaine. It was not *in* her to put away a blessing, or what seemed such, with a crushing, humbling, and abiding sense of inherited unworthiness. She was not strong enough to make such a sacrifice; and even had a "spasmodic" strength enabled her to do it, in the grief that would have followed, in the regret and self-desertion, she would have perished.

The all-absorbing nature of this passion was soon put to the test. A malignant disease broke out in Wells, and on its appearance among her scholars, Florence was compelled to disband them for a time.

The contagion had, however, been communicated before the school broke up, and Clara was among the first infected with it. Owing to precautions which Mrs. Percy had taken, Rose was in no danger from the disease, and during the dreary and anxious time of Clara's awful sickness, she remained with Florence; and while others shrank from the house of pestilence, those two sisterly watchers were constantly nursing Clara by day and by night; and when her recovery was made certain, it was by their united endeavors, Rose learning to exercise these by the example Florence set her, that the poor patient was strengthened to meet her further, and exceeding grievous trial. What that trial was Clara knew full well, yet for days she shrank from more than contemplation of its mere shadow. But at last her wish was expressed, and once expressed, she persisted in it, that the mirror should be placed before her. Poor child! it was *only* truth as she felt it, that she expressed then: it had been *better*

for her, far better, if she had been left to die in the "desolate horror of the disease."

Yet, even in that bitterness of self-loathing and disgust, her chief, almost her only thought, was for Mr. Gerard. Florence, the blessed, brave Florence, did not shrink from her, that was true; *her* caressings and gentle words were not withheld; but that, Clara said to herself, was because her sister was so full of kindness and pity for *all* the suffering. What would bind him, who, she felt, might have loved her for something beside her real nature? She had now left—to her honor be it told—no wish to bind him to his vows; but what a sickening, dreadful thought it was, he might eagerly seek to release himself from her, and from those vows!

Mr. Gerard had been prepared for the change wrought by disease in his betrothed; for, in his frequent visits at the house during her convalescence, Florence had told him all, and endeavored to prepare his mind for the shock, which she was determined neither should dare till Clara was beyond all danger. Those tears of Florence could flow now for all griefs but her own, and they would not be controlled when, as the trial of an interview was about to be made, she saw that man struggling so strongly with himself and striving to hide his uncontrollable grief; and she *almost* loved him when he conquered his emotion and told her, with such apparent honesty, that his affection for Clara could not do other than come off conquerer over all disappointment. But for Clara a day so dark had never opened as that on which she granted him the first interview after her sickness.

VI.

THERE was a most solemn silence, it was so fraught with meaning, when Mr. Gerard entered the room where Clara, in terrified anguish, awaited him. But when he was fairly there before her, looking upon her, she was first to recover herself sufficiently to be able to speak; and it was painful to see the effort she made to address him calmly, and observe his struggle to listen, as *she* thought (justly?) his compassion only con-

strained him to listen. But evidently the change in her was greater than he had even thought to see.

"We did not look to meet *so*," she said. Her soft, sweet voice! that was not lost, and with a thrill of joy he heard it. "Is it as grievous, as dreadful a meeting for you, as it is for me, Giles?"

Had he spoken his thoughts in answer, his words had been of another sort; but he conquered that impulse by a violent effort, and said, soothingly:

"We parted as dear friends and plighted: we meet as such, dearest. But indeed I am grieved you have been so very ill."

"You are kinder than I even dared hope; for I have been selfish enough to hope! But my hope has, truly, not gone beyond this, that you would not turn away from me in disgust. Your words make you even more precious than you were to me;" and she turned her face away, and her voice sank to a whisper as she added: "In all sincerity, *can* you find it in your heart to love me still?"

"My Clara!" exclaimed he, and his voice was full of the fondest reproach. He folded her in his arms, and kissed her tenderly as she had been an infant. An instant after she released herself, and said, though her voice was hardly audible:

"I shall take a thought of you and of this moment with me through life; it will be a blessing to feel that you loved me to the last, that something more than externals found acceptance with you. I would not be nearer or other to you than dear at this moment. Of yourself, I say, you are inexpressibly precious. I love you better than when we parted last; and that I had not thought possible. But I shall not put your generosity to a severer test. You will bear kind thoughts of me wherever you go, and always, will you not? And in heaven—all is beauty there."

"Child! what is this you're talking about?" was his half-angry, half-tearful exclamation. "Why do you banish your hopes, as you call them, to heaven? Have I no power to detain them here? Are you not recovering? Have we not a beautiful world to live in? Do we not love each other? You, dear child! did you think I loved you because I thought you

the most beautiful and graceful creature I ever met? Clara, disease has done its worst for you; now imagine what it was I loved when I swear, by all that is true, you are at this moment dearer than ever before. You and you only, Clara, shall I ever marry."

"No," was the feebly-uttered reply. "I shall hide myself from the world. The remembrance of your words will be enough for me to live on. God has cursed me, Giles, as he cursed those of old with whom he was displeased. Let the leper live apart from love and the world."

"It is sheer nonsense. Have I fallen in your esteem? Do not hesitate to tell me. Forget all the past, think of the now: do you *really* care for me?"

"I love you."

"Well, I love you," he rejoined. "In the name of heaven, what more is wanted? You are not going to wed the world, if *that* is what you are thinking of now; nor is the world's opinion your breath of life. You are to marry *me*, whom you have honored with your favor till I feel almost too proud to live on this earth as ordinary mortals do. As soon as your strength is sufficiently recovered to allow, you must fix on our marriage-day."

She believed him; she believed the many, many tender and loving words he uttered in that trying, yet blessed interview.

VII.

NEARLY a year from the time of Willis Percy's going passed, ere he returned to Wells. On the sudden death of his mother, letters were forwarded to him, but they were months in finding their way to him; and when they were at last received, his departure for home was not delayed one day.

And gladly was he welcomed on his return, he came so full of life, and health, and vigor, by Florence and the little Rose. For his part, nothing could so much have rejoiced the heart of the mourning son, as did the finding his child-sister under the guardianship of the woman of his love; nothing, at least, but the recital Florence made of his mother's last triumphs, and of

the blessing wherewith she, dying, had blessed her. And when he saw how tender and entire an affection existed between Florence and Rose, and thought of his mother's words, he fancied that all difficulty was now removed in the way to the fruition of his best hope: he looked, but did not speak the expectation, for even as he looked it, she said, "I cannot tell you how happy I was, even at such a moment, though Rose was sobbing so bitterly, for I could only think, 'A mother has blessed me!' If God shall bless us in the way we most hope before we die, Willis, think of it! I have had a mother's blessing, too. Oh, how thankful I should be! I *am* thankful."

It would have been no less vain than unmanly to struggle for conquest with Florence in a matter which had become so essentially one of conscience; and as he now prepared to apply himself with fresh ardor to study, he was greatly enabled to do so; and the conviction became an abiding one, that in no other way could he so well grow in grace and strength, as by trusting patiently to God, to time, and to her, for the future's brightness.

He did not often visit at the cottage school-house, after his return. It was not necessary that he should, in order that the mutual confidence between himself and Florence should be kept alive; and both felt that frequent intercourse, during the continuance of their present relations, would distract their thoughts too much, when they needed to be kept in calmness for the successful pursuit of daily labors. But Willis had taken for his motto, "Hope on," and its actings were revealed in his cheerfulness and true piety; and so, whenever he and Florence were together, by reason of their resolves, and the discipline to which they subjected themselves, each felt, as they parted again, that it had been good for them to be together: their hearts had grown stronger, meanwhile, their souls had caught another note of the jubilant hymn of Cheerfulness.

But there was a day that came, at last, when they met in sorrow, and conferred in sorrow, and parted with heavy grief. Since the time when he heard of the relations existing between Clara and Giles Gerard, of Clara's illness and its shocking effects, there had been a fear and a doubt in Percy's mind, to

which he longed, yet hesitated, to give utterance. For days he struggled between a sense of urgent duty, and a fear of misconception, and a gentle dread, which those who have suffered most know the most of, the dread of giving pain. He longed to say that which might be utterly misunderstood, or altogether disbelieved; that which doubt might turn, a double-edged weapon, against himself. But at last he determined to speak with Florence, come what might, of what she herself had determined to ask him; and it so happened, that at the very time when he was laboring to find words for his communication, she took occasion to say:

"Am I wrong in supposing that you have some particular and pressing thought which you wish to make known to me, and don't know how?"

"No; you are right," he answered, resolutely. "I did wish to speak with you, yet did not dare, for fear my words might be misconstrued. From the relations which you know I should be so proud to form with *you*, it might be suspected—I mean," he said, more solemnly, "any one but you might suspect there were some other than right motives influencing me to say what I must say to you. You will, I feel convinced, understand the purity of my motives. The fact that Mr. Gerard is still betrothed to Clara, and that, as common report goes, they will shortly be married, impels me to tell you the truth, and it cannot be gainsaid. He is not a man with whom your sister can be happy, if she loves truth, or cares for virtue, or if she despises loathsome sin!"

He arose as he said this, his face pale with emotion, and his eyes filled with tears. Florence also arose, and said, hurriedly, "You speak in such a way, that had you said this of another, yet nearer than he, I could but believe you. I am as sure that you tell the truth, as that I live. You would certainly not come here with a mere report—and *such* a report. But mere words would fail to convince Clara. They ought not to. Oh! it would be too awful to take this comfort from her, Percy."

"I would certainly not have *dared* come to you with the story, had I not feared to keep it from you. I declare, as most solemn truth, in all parts of this land, among the great people who con-

sider him an equal, he is well known as a gambler and a dissolute man. I know, too, that there are many very proud ladies of his acquaintance who would be glad to assume the relations your sister bears toward him. But if I know Clara Swaine and you, I am convinced you would both shrink, as from pollution, from a man like him, whatever the world might think of him."

A momentary silence followed his words. It was broken by Florence, saying: "I thank you for the courage you have shown in coming with this story to me. I have already persuaded them to defer the marriage for the present. I will prove my perfect faith in you by speaking of this to Clara."

They parted immediately after.

Florence was leaning against the mantel, her head bent in deep thought. She was pondering Percy's words, and she could not hide from herself the fact that the words had only given form to the fears, which, in many ways, had been suggested to her. As she stood thus and thought, a door opposite to that through which her friend had gone out, opened, and Clara entered. She only stood within the door of the room, and when her sister's raised eyes fixed upon her with most earnest sorrow, she returned the glance with an almost fierce indignation, exclaiming:

"Is it possible that you have tamely listened to, and meekly promised to use the mean weapons of slander against him and me? Shame on you, Florence! Could you not defend an absent friend against calumny?"

"You have heard it all, Clara?"

"Yes; I could not avoid listening. It is certain that listeners never hear any good of themselves."

"Oh! do not say so. It seems a comfort to me even that I have not to tell you that. I do not see how I should ever have found strength to."

"Then you believe what Percy says? I never heard any thing so utterly contemptible."

"At least," said Florence after a moment's pause—and in that moment she had conquered a deal of indignation—"at least you are sufficiently sane and wise to see the necessity to *wish* to wait a little, before irrevocably deciding about such a mat-

ter as this. A man like Willis Percy, let me tell you, Clara—oh! my dear, dear Clara!—would not breathe such things to me, a woman, your sister, if there were not something in the story.”

“I tell you he has some secret motive; or if not that,” she added, self-rebuked by her words, “he has been astonishingly credulous. O my God! have I not been tried enough already? You should have ordered him from the house, Florence. It was an insult to us, as well as to Mr. Gerard, that *he* should presume to come here with such slanderous gossip as that!”

“You are talking far more like a child than a sane woman should. I hope—you will not, I fear, for you seem wofully beside yourself—but I hope you will see that it could but be my most fervent prayer that Mr. Percy has been misinformed. I only charge you, dearest Clara, do not in a blind confidence trust too far; do not, in a romantic confidence, make yourself liable to a long future of regret. I hope as devoutly as you can, that I am unjust in this. If *I* wrong Mr. Gerard, it is unconsciously, and you ought to know it. If you do not know it, we have lived together to little purpose.”

“Yes, I do know it!”

“Then I charge you, be patient. You can learn no lesson so important as that, Clara, in this life.”

VIII.

THE penetrative powers of Mr. Gerard told him that some unhappy influence was working in the mind of Clara, when he again visited her. And the confidence she had in him would have prevented her, in case of his clear questioning, from withholding the truth of the matter; but he did not choose to work thus, and instead, drew the secret from her almost involuntarily, till she found that he had possessed himself of it entirely.

The question he asked then was, “What has Florence said to this, or does she not know of it?” And it was thus answered, and with as much eagerness as though Clara were defending her sister against some wronging thought: “She re-

peats the advice which you remember she gave at first, long before I heard this ; for she says it is always better to wait and bear patiently, than do in haste what might cause the repentance of years."

"Excellent advice! *if it were needed.* Tell me, does she believe this story?"

"She may not believe it, Giles, yet she advises us on each other's account, to delay. She says prudence demands it."

"We will *not* delay," was the decided answer. "Choose between her and me."

Clara's face was bent upon her hands: she could not, she dared not answer. At last he grew impatient at her silence, and fell upon his knees before her, whispering:

"Have you not perfect faith in me? If I thought you had not, I would spurn you!" He said it with all the indignant emphasis of a wronged and virtuous man. "You have faith," he continued, in answer to the gentle pressure of her hand. "Well, then, you shall prove it, and at once. I scorn my accusers, but I will show them the glorious faith of a woman. You shall be mine; and then, when we stand side by side together, one, in that world which has dared impugn my honor, you will see, Clara, how they will come fawning around us, and you will learn from what a vile, insignificant source—it *could be* none other—that voice came to distress you." He kissed her fervently, and then asked with bewilderingly sweet voice, "*Are you afraid?*"

"No," was the instant answer: she might well have been! "But Florence? Oh! dear as you are, think what she has been to me, what she has done for me! How could I act in opposition to her will, and grieve her, as the least deception on my part would, past all help? How could I even be at peace with myself? For I know how much she is in earnest when she counsels this delay."

"She need not know it. Go with me alone from hence, as if we should go to-day in secret, and come back openly and in triumph to-morrow. The world, be you sure, child, for I know more of that world than you do, will glorify you for the courageous act. And how much you will honor me by such confi-

dence! You will make me doubly your slave. I cannot brook to have another directing us. I must have you by my side always. I cannot endure this parting with you day after day. I do not want, I cannot longer permit those to come between us who would postpone our union indefinitely, for the mere gratification of their own whim or selfishness."

"But, dear Giles," was the faltering argument put forth when the girl's soul was all a-flame with his words, "I cannot charge Florence with selfishness. You do not know her as I do. She has been all to me heretofore. I assure you it is not without reason that I look up to her as though she were more than a mere elder sister."

"Well, then, honestly, I believe you: she is not selfish. But you acknowledge she *is* over-careful in this endeavor to put you on your guard against *me*. Dear Clara, we are not children. There is not a mortal existing to whom you are so bound as to me; or, tell me, *is* there another?"

"You *know* there is not one," was the answer.

"Yes, I know it, by this feeling I have for you. There is perfect sympathy between us. Then why should you listen to the suggestions of others, rather than to me? Go with me to my house: we will be married there. It will then and thus be in your power to aid Florence, to give to her entire rest and ease, should she desire it; for if she will, our home shall be hers. She shall be freed from that wearying life she leads; for she will permit *you* to aid her, when I could not even offer to do so. We will all go abroad: you shall learn life, and enjoy it to the full, dearest."

That suggestion relating to Florence was well put. It made the idea of flying for a moment from her protection seem less dreadful: for Clara had fancied many times how glorious and pleasant a thing it would be to give her noble sister rest, and station, and riches, such as she deserved; and since the engagement with Mr. Gerard, this fancying had transformed itself into a good within her grasp. He had before this used the promise as an assurance; he produced it now, a temptation. Should she put it away for ever, in the weak fear of doing that which should make people talk and wonder for a day?

Days passed after this important interview before Mr. Gerard came again to see Clara. He stayed away only for the purpose of exciting her wonder and fear at his absence, that when he should again present himself, her feeble will might be completely subdued to his. He had not studied the poor child in vain; he had made no miscalculation in regard to her character. By that very policy was she placed wholly at his mercy; for before he appeared again, Clara had resolved that she would go with him wherever he chose to lead her. But it was in vain that she strove to hush the voice within, by the deceiving idea that she should benefit Florence, and *repay* her long devotion thus; she could not satisfy herself with the sophism that the end justified the means. It was with her a struggle of thought to the last, and when the struggle ended in her resolution, Florence and Gerard were all she really thought of. Her own happiness was not at that time the grand idea. Her own? It was the last she could reason about then. A love for him that amounted to entire abnegation of self had been her heart's offering since that day during her recovery when he avowed his faithful and entire love for her. Had it not been so, she would yet—oh! in the name of human nature do not doubt it!—have hesitated, re-thought, and, perhaps, have prayed over that temptation.

“In a day, or at very farthest a week, they would come back. Did she dare fear or doubt him?” He asked it that bright morning when she went out from Wells and joined him, and left with him the paths of duty, peace, and holiness. He asked it; and the sun shone so joyously, and the birds sang so sweetly, the flowers bloomed so purely, everything seemed so merry and so fair, that she answered, “No;” but the answer had less of sincerity in it than when uttered while under the care and protection of Florence.

IX.

Nor only that one day which Clara had appointed in her own mind for time of absence, but many days, so many that they began to be numbered for months, passed by, while the una-

vailing search and watching for her return continued. No doubts existed as to with whom she had departed ; but *how* she had gone was a tormenting and dreadful thought for the grieved and disappointed Florence. The deception practised against her by one whom she had loved and tenderly watched over through her life-time, fell with awfully enlightening force upon her. She could not rally ; she was almost blinded by it. Through the loneliness and gloom and grief, which settled like a steadfast cloud upon the house after Clara's going, but one ray of brightness and comfort streamed ; the joyous, half-blind, merry, and affectionate little Rose Percy. It seemed to her teacher, her sister, Florence, in those days, that the blessing of the child's mother had indeed taken a tangible form in the person of Rose ; and in the girl's constant presence, her true innocence and childliness, she felt that she was finding her real earthly comfort and sustainer. The more sentient companionship of Willis even did not equal that of the guilelessness and dependence of the little one.

After a search of many weeks, which was continued in every imaginable way, the idea of its being crowned with success was abandoned in despair ; and then Florence, looking to ONE mighty, and to herself, again turned her attention to her daily tasks, as strong really but still more grave and silent than before that day of dreadful visitation. Was there no other way for her to do than to still toil on ? Could she find no safe shelter and retirement from the curious ? Yes ! Willis Percy had again opened the doors of his home, and entreated her to enter, as its mistress ; he had besought her to take his honorable name for her own ; he had implored her to accept his protection from the shame and disgrace brought on her own house ; and she put away the cup of blessing, and said, "Though I should die, will I be true to myself !"

The close of the year of Clara's absence found Florence receiving the erring, lost sister of her heart, to her lowly home again, with tearless eyes, but prayerful, and therefore not despairing calmness ; found her in a consciousness of new need, and still sterner duty, that filled heart and brain with terrific

light, seeking and finding strength to not only labor diligently—she had done *that* always—but in addition, to watch and guard the broken, shattered mind, the feeble life of the poor wanderer. And succeeding days, and months, and years, saw her growing up to the performance of that necessity; and when parted at last from her great human comfort, little Rose, whose mind she had prepared for other instruction than she could give, Florence was compelled to look for relief from her school toils only to the more distressing, because hopeless tasks devolving on her as Clara's guardian.

Of what those months of absence had been to Clara in the proving, Florence never knew; and it was well that she could not know. The name of Gerard never escaped her sister's lips after the time of her return. All energy, all sense, all affection and interest, seemed to have been left behind in the outer world of horror from which she had escaped on that night, that wild and dreadful midnight of her return home; that night when Florence heard her beseeching voice above the voice of the storm, and knowing what and whose it was, hastened to receive the loved and lost one back.

During the five following years of Clara's life, at regular intervals, letters came to her address, (he had not given her even another name!) containing drafts, which, if made use of in the way directed, would have enabled the sisters to live in entire ease, in luxury, had they so chosen. But, though the support of the household now depended on her unaided efforts, for Clara had lost all ability for and knowledge of her former pursuits, those drafts were never "dishonored" by Florence in making use of them; and they had no other "sight" than that of fire. She would have perished herself from want, and would have suffered Clara to know the same fate, rather than accept relief from him who had worked them such intolerable wrong.

Those five years passed, and Florence was alone: her sister had gone with the dead. She went not obeying the call of the Almighty, but at her own bidding. Her insanity or imbecility had taken in the last days of her life a new form: she became utterly mute, as one deaf and dumb, and no word, or sign, or

token of understanding could be drawn from her; and it was while this change was causing an increase of dread in the mind of Florence, that all cause for farther watching and sorrow for Clara was removed for ever. She was found drowned. The life of the gentle, and trusting, and deceived, and erring Clara ended with a tragedy.

The teacher had been out with her pupils for a half-day's ramble in the woods, leaving her sister in the house-keeper's charge. The return of Florence and the children to the town led over a bridge which spanned the river D——; and when at night-fall they crossed it, they found themselves awed and trembling amidst a crowd which had gathered at the magic words, "a woman drowned!" and *her* eyes were among those gazing with pitying eagerness to distinguish the form and half-hid features of the suicide, and her voice was the faintest of those which broke forth with such grief and horror, when the name of Clara Swaine was once again taken on the lips of a wondering people; and her form was the first to bend, with forgiveness and faithful, fearless love, over the dead.

When it was discovered that life was quite extinct, a litter was hastily procured by the sympathizing multitude; the body was placed upon it, and then for a moment Florence stooped over it, smoothing the drenched and tangled hair and closing the eyelids. As they paused thus in deep silence ere the bier was lifted, the people were compelled to stand hastily back; for a coach with fiery horses came dashing rapidly over the bridge, and one who rode therein had much to do with that poor dead creature's history. The dust his proud steeds raised fell on the face of Clara. Poor Clara! more pitiable Gerard! She had gone to the judgment: he, in the strength of his pride, and wealth, and years, was going on into the world, whose smiles and cordial greeting would, he well knew, await him wherever he might turn; where his example was to be spread, and where the frown of woman would surely be not raised against him, nor the scorn and scoff of men!

The courage, strength and ability which had, during all Clara's life, and more especially in its last years, increased with every new trial and discouragement, seemed for a time after

that death to fail Florence totally. For a while with high heart she struggled against nature's encroaching self-distrust, weakness and despondency, but then the over-taxed heart failed utterly. The courage, not earth-born, nor earth-sustained, had been long the comfort and sustainer of her soul. Where was it? why had it vanished? Even in the "patient, never-wearying love" of Percy, which never revealed itself more clearly and generously than now, Florence found no consoler, no sustainer. It was even at one time a source of bitter thought, for it seemed to her as though this love had been given merely to aggravate and to tantalize; proffered as it was to a sense of justice so strict and stern as nature and circumstances had fostered in her soul. But, praise to the Grace that did not then desert her! the wrongful thought was wrestled with and overcome. Religion had been long the great comfort of her soul, and it was not to prove a broken cistern in the time of her great need! And now again her soul put off its sackcloth, and she went on her way willing to live, and thankful that she could live, by faith and not by sight.

For some time Percy and she had been separated by distance, he having gone to take the pastoral charge of a church in Brunswick. On hearing of Clara's death he came at once to Florence, feeling that she had a right to look for him, and a hope that he had cherished for years stood out full in the light as he sought her, to speak consoling and holy words. But stricken as he found her, she would accept no more from him than his Christian sympathy. It would have been no marvel if, when he parted with her again, and stood once more among his people, he had preached to them with a new force, and in a new sense, concerning the Saviour's "Be ye perfect," he carried with him from Florence such an entire conviction that it was possible for mortals to obey the very letter and spirit of the far-reaching injunction.

Percy's last visit to Florence, and the few and brief letters she wrote him, did much for him; the breath of resignation was transmitted from her soul into his, and he began to learn much of that divine patience from her, the patience that could endure even till time was no more, looking for its mea-

sure of happiness, denied on earth, to another state of existence. After all the impatience of youth, the love-longing and expectance, peace, calm peace and true submission came, and dwelt within him, comforting him, and precious to him beyond all things, because he knew it was a twin-spirit of the quiet that was in her. That peace! it was the good Samaritan to him! His early hopes went by all on the other side, and he saw them going, while he lay wounded to the heart, weak and powerless; and then peace, that very peace which Florence knew, came to him, bound up his wounds, and left him in the care of the great Physician, and He restored and blessed him.

When the Samaritan's good offices were abiding in the soul, and proving themselves in the daily life which he pursued; while he was receiving calmly, and with intelligent consciousness, the conviction that he was indeed a stranger and a pilgrim on earth, ordained to toil, and grow not weary in his journeying, he was compelled to test his strength, to prove the genuineness of his peace. Tidings came to him, but not through Florence, that an *envoy extraordinary* had come, seeking her, from England, bearing a recognition and a will from her father, by which she was made heir to an immense fortune. The story was communicated to Percy through a friend whose word he could not doubt; and acting on the instant suggestion of a thankful heart, he wrote to Florence:

“Why are you silent? I have waited all this day—it seems a century—for words from you. I have had such joyful news of you as I cannot believe you would willingly keep from me. Are you ill? May I come to you? Oh! tell me what you *wish* me, what I *may* do. I have no mind of my own left; for I write, Florence, in the overwhelming consciousness that you are happy now beyond all you have dared or allowed yourself to hope. The longing, the intense desire of your life appears before you in the shape of a full blessing. I dare not think of the way in which you may remember me. It will be your place, power, necessity, to think of me as for the first time in the light of a petitioning lover, for I know all things must *now* become as it were new to you. You must say *to-day* to *you*

heart, whether you can love me. I plead nothing ; my heart leaves itself wholly to your heart's judgment. You have tried and proved the things of this world ; you have a more than ordinary knowledge of life as it is really. If, looking into the inmost recesses of your heart, you find no image of me remaining, do not hesitate to tell me of it. Even in that happening I would not have you forget, unless the assurance is worthless, that I rejoice in your present cause for rejoicing as thoroughly as I have in past times sorrowed in your sorrows.

"Your friend in truth,

W. PERCY."

A letter and an envoy had indeed come ; they had been received by Florence. Judge Browning, one of the most distinguished of England's lawyers, had on his death-bed dispatched this person with a word of recognition and a will, by which his daughter was left a millionaire, and Florence received them. It seemed indeed, in the experience of that day, as though no sorrow were to be spared her, no pang of disappointment. After others had announced to her the glad tidings of the bright fulfilment of her whole life's hope, the stranger came into her presence, satisfied that it was she to whom he bore the acknowledgment of one whom the great men of England revered. He laid the letter before her, and with her own eyes Florence read what Judge Browning had written on his death-bed. She read the story of his youth and poverty ; of his wife, and of her sufferings and early death ; of his child, *his only one*, whom before her mother died they, in their destitution and misery, left to the care of strangers. No attempt was made in the epistle to palliate the neglect which had continued in his after-years' prosperity. Compensation was made, or the dying man had evidently *endeavored* to suppose it was made, in giving at the last wealth and name to his child. It was not the thought of this long desertion that spread darkness over the eyes of her who read, that sent sickness into her very soul, that cast a shadow like the shadow of death over her for a moment, when she thought of the child to whom that letter was addressed ; of Clara, to whom another hand had been extended, for whom

another voice than that of her proud, vain-glorious, earthly parent, had said the recognising words: "*My child!*"

Refolding the letter—for with that what had she to do ?—she returned it to the envoy, and said, “The recognition is made many years too late. I am not Clara Swaine, to whom you will see this letter is addressed. She was the only child of Judge Browning, if I read aright? She is dead.”

“He had never but one child ; but is it possible I do not see that daughter before me ? What a dreadful mistake !”

"I must refer you to Mrs. Hammel, the matron of our Foundling Hospital, sir: she is the one with whom you could most profitably confer now. If the disposal of this property is in your power, do not forget her, and the house of refuge in which she has spent herself. It was a home for Clara many years, as you are probably aware."

The messenger bowed himself out in silence: he could not find words wherewith to address the woman who had gone down from the sun-light into the darkness of disappointment, even while his eyes were upon her, in such calm submission.

X.

DAYS passed on, and Percy's letter was unanswered. Those days were marked for him by wonder, anxiety, and impatience; but for her they were recorded as the witnesses of a victory over the last great temptation of Florence Swaine.

But at last, at last she wrote to him. Without and around her, in that hour, were signs and tokens of an approaching departure, noise and confusion : the little cottage, the home of years, was nearly dismantled ; one room only was as yet untouched, that in which she had lived long alone with her tried and purified soul. The widowed house-keeper had gone back to the friendly protection of the hospital, and the matron there was bethinking and wondering over a romance she had known in real life. In other dwelling-places beside that of Florence there were evidences of leave-taking, of sundering ties, of sorrow and hope battling together. But there were no homes so desolate as that where she sat alone, writing to **WILLIAM**.

soft summer wind was filling the sails of a vessel lying in the harbor, waiting its passengers ; a vessel which was that night to go forth on a far voyage to heathendom.

There was a deathly pallor on the face of Florence as she wrote, dimness in her brilliant eyes, but the gathering tears did not fall ; and though her hand trembled so violently when she began to write that she could hardly guide her pen, yet was she going forth conquering and *to conquer!*

“ You would have folded me safely in the shelter of your name, WILLIS, while disgrace was on mine. Should you take me now, you would not find *the disgrace of doubt* removed. You would have defended me, when the harsh judgment of the world had gone forth against mine—mine no longer, by tie of life or of blood ! You would have saved me from labor, have shielded me from sorrow, had it been in your power ; and now, when, if I dared or could I would cry, ‘ *Take me!* ’ you fold your arms, you look on me distrustfully, fearing for the constancy, the trueness of my heart’s love for you, because you think I am in prosperity ! Give me back your old confidence ; indeed, indeed I deserve it, if I ever did. Do I not *need* it ! Oh ! noblest heart ! believe me, it is my joy and consolation in this hour, the last, the very last spent in my native land, to think that I have been permitted to love you.

“ You have learned probably by this time that it was on Clara the too-late blessing felt ; that I have always been unconnected by natural ties with her, with any whom I know. From me you will learn that I am going *now*, at once, to give my future years, my strength—I have strength yet, dear WILLIS—my years, my strength and talents, to the service of our MAKER. It matters little whether that service be rendered here or afar. Do not call it weakness that leads me hence. *I might fail here.* I must free myself from the recollections which are so closely associated with this place. I should have asked your counsel, had I not seen my duty to myself and my God so clearly pointed out, that I dare not shrink from its performance—I cannot shrink. You know of this party of Christians about to sail for India. Some of them are our own personal friends ; and

I know that did I consult you merely as a Christian pastor might be consulted, you would say to me, 'Listen to that voice within you; pray to God; and then act as your judgment shall decide.' This I *have* done, and nothing remains for me but to say to you, Farewell. Farewell! We are not parting for ever. I know we shall not meet again in this life; I shall never hear your voice; you will not see my face again. Had I thought that we were equal to a calm parting, I would have called you to me. Farewell! 'Our help is in the name of the LORD;' we are His servants. Let us be faithful: *He will not disown us.*

"In the bonds of faith, and fellowship, and love, yes, by the grace of God, your
F. S."

The vessel had sailed ere this letter reached its destination. Florence looked her last upon her native land. Thenceforth was she no more to Willis Percy, but as much as an angel-thought, a guardian, soothing and sustaining angel-thought. Her going left him in one sense peculiarly and sadly alone; and yet, could he have done so, he would not have called her back. In his imagination he saw her going, as she really did, calmly, resolutely, holily, and his spirit would not even whisper, "Return, and bless me." She *had* blessed him in that very act of departing. So were his hands made free, and his heart purified; so was his soul in its entirety drawn upward in adoration, and between heaven and earth it vibrated, in every movement worshipping, and rendering service acceptable to God.

Years went by before he answered that letter of farewell; and he had not meanwhile heard from Florence, save through others. When he did write to her, he also was on the eve of a departure; he had "set his house in order;" he was going "home." And he knew, for friends had told him, that her feet had entered the same path, that she too would soon enter her FATHER'S house. Percy died in the very prime of life and usefulness; he was cut down in the midst of apparent vigor, and energy, and watchful labor; he had fought a good fight; he had kept the faith. Then, as he had desired, ~~the body was sent~~ over the great oceans, to the land whose ~~people~~ ~~he~~ ~~had~~

striven to enlighten, whose people she had toiled to bless, with a patience, and hope, and ardor too, which, if individually exhausting and destroying, were, as an example, life-giving and glorious. And that letter she read for the first time on her death-day. Had she not reason to fold it **THEN**, as she did, closely upon her breast? Had she not cause, when her heart was groping no longer "blindly in the dark" for an earthly father's love and benediction, to say, triumphantly as she did, while her spirit was being caught up to meet **HIM**:

"My SAVIOUR, not deserted!"

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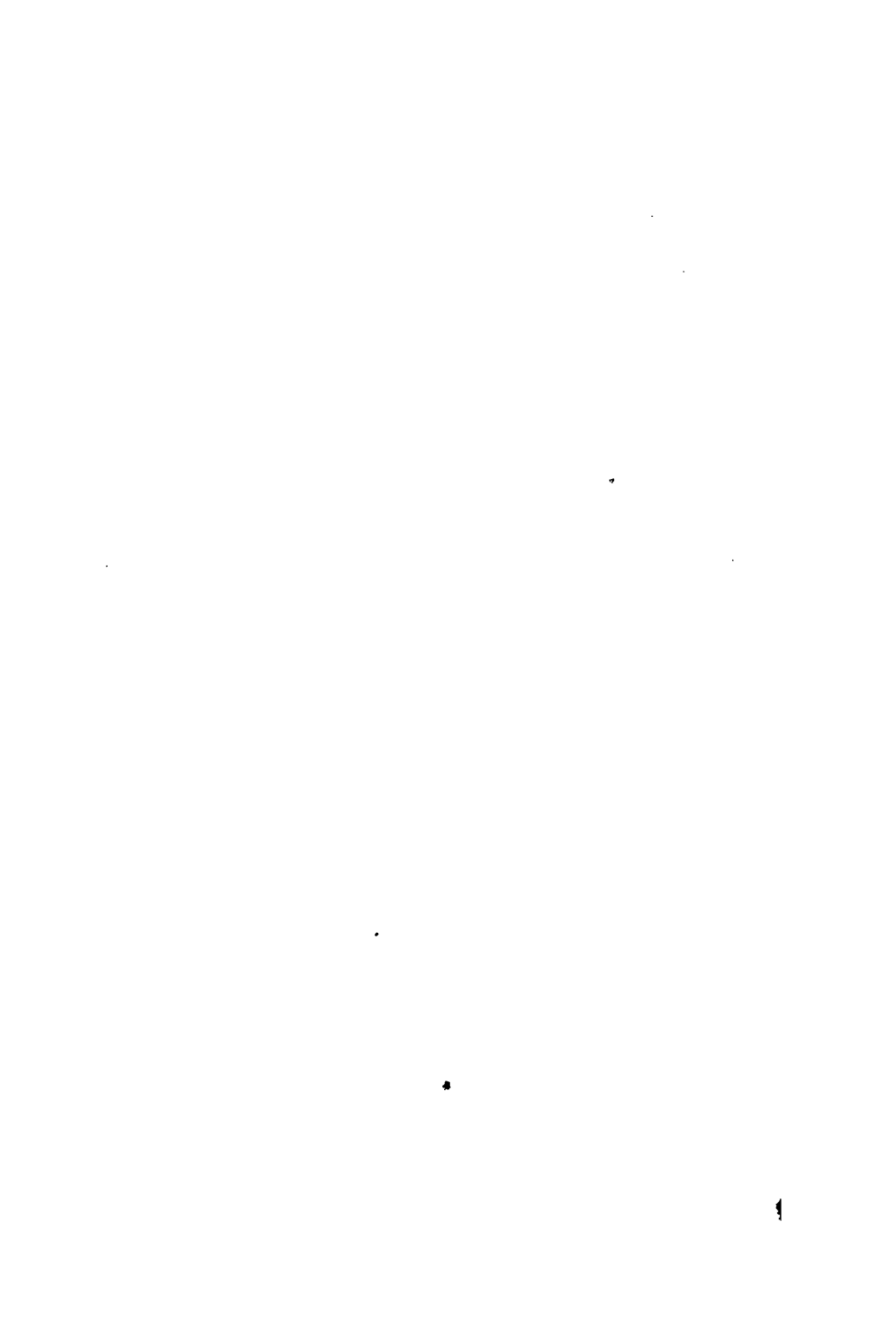
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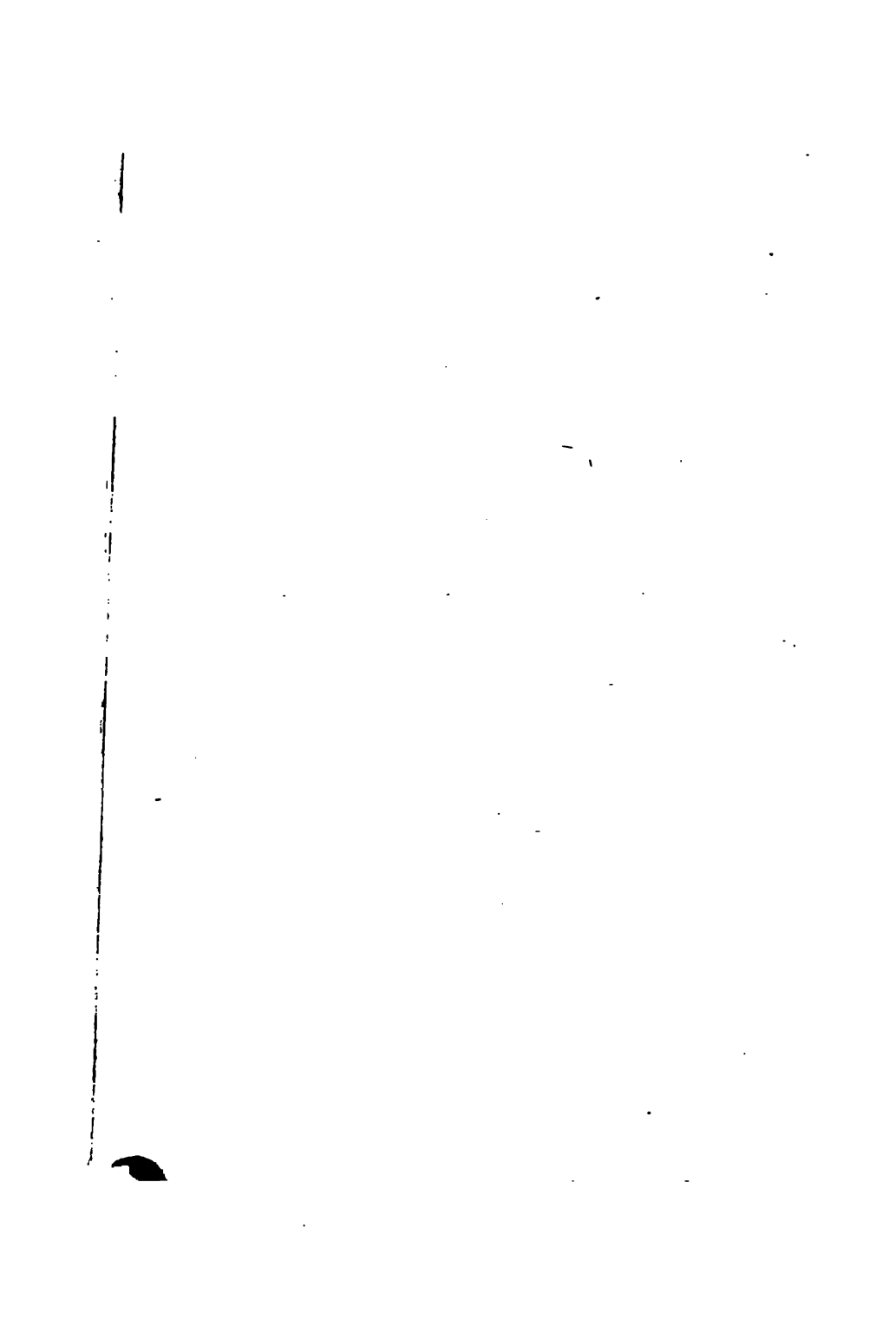
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